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OK, kids: Time to talk about sex

PAGE 10

NEWS WORTH SHARING.

Riders get heated as TTC weathers the cold

Transit. Shutdowns, delays blamed on aging infrastructure, underfunded system

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD
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Frustrated transit riders blamed the TTC after flooding shut down one of the busiest subway lines during morning rush hour Monday — a day of record-breaking cold.

For Svetlana Obukhova, it was another example of a winter of transit woes, with station shutdowns, streetcar breakdowns and a general sense that on any given day, you can expect delays on the TTC.

A TTC spokesman and the chair of the city's transit commission are united on what's behind the troubles: a 60-year-old, and still-aging, system.

And some say the only solution is money. "We have to perform better in bad weather than we have," said councillor and TTC chairman Josh Colle. "I don't think people should come to expect it, I don't think we should as an organization use that as an excuse."

This was the scene at subway stations Monday during the shutdown of the Yonge line. @EMERALDBRACKEN/TWITTER

Streetcar failures in the cold and flooding at subway stations — something that's plagued the last few weeks of winter almost daily — are part of the price paid for underfunding the TTC in the past, Colle said.

"It underscores how fragile a system can get when it's not properly maintained and not properly funded."

TTC spokesman Brad Ross added: "We are where we are today, we recognize that things need to be improved and that's what we're doing."

It's not yet clear what caused Monday's equipment failure, which shut down the Yonge line between Union and Bloor. But, Ross noted, "extreme temperatures are going to cause extreme problems that you can't always anticipate."

Jessica Bell, spokeswoman for advocacy group TTCriders, said the bottom line comes down to money: Toronto remains the lowest-funded transit system in North America, and it's showing with each dip of the thermometer, she said.

Obukhova said funding arguments don't do enough to explain repeated delays. "(The subway is) literally two lines, why can't they figure it out?" she said, adding: "It's not my problem that they can't get up with the 21st Century."

Fore more TTC coverage, see pages 2 & 3.

BARBER BIZ BUZZING

Rod, Gun & Barbers Gentlemen's Lounge proprietor Jeff James, seated, gets a trim from barber Chris Sweiter on Monday. Owner James offers a bit of booze and his French bulldog Boris as perks at his west-end shop. Barbershops seem to be popping up on streets from one end of the city to another. See story, page 8. DAVID VAN DYKE/METRO

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Bring on the pedestrian scrambles, advocates say

Traffic. Committee decides to scrap priority crossing at Bay and Bloor, but Walk Toronto says other city intersections are in need of scrambling

LUKE SIMCOE
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One step backward, two steps forward?

Toronto's public works committee voted Monday to scrap the pedestrian priority crossing at Bay and Bloor streets, but walking advocates insist there's a case for adding similar crossings to at least two other intersections downtown.

Commonly known as "scrambles," the intersections allow pedestrians to cross in all directions once per traffic cycle.

The Bay and Bloor scramble has been a topic of debate since it was installed in 2010. City staff recently recommended spending $26,000 to remove it, arguing too few pedestrians use the intersection.

"Compared to the other pedestrian priority phases in downtown Toronto, this intersection has the lowest volume of pedestrians as well as the lowest ratio of pedestrians to motorized users," read the staff report.

Should the city add a pedestrian scramble to the intersection at Bay and Queen streets? Based on data from 2010, roughly 78,000 pedestrians use the intersection every day, compared to 38,000 cars. DAVID VAN DYKE/METRO

Walk Toronto spokesman Dylan Reid doesn't dispute the city's analysis, but he said the data cuts both ways. If the city is going to use numbers to justify removing a scramble, it should also be adding scrambles to intersections that meet the criteria, he said.

"My hope is that when this goes to council, they'll step up and ... develop the two other top intersections for scrambles."

According to municipal data presented by Walk Toronto, there are at least four other intersections with higher ratios of pedestrians to vehicles than Yonge and Bloor, where the scramble has been a success.

Reid said Bay and Wellington streets would be an "obvious" choice, with nearly 65,000 pedestrians crossing daily compared to only 32,000 cars.

"Pedestrians are literally falling off the sidewalks on that part of Bay Street all day," he said.

There's also Yonge Street and Eglinton Avenue, the second-busiest pedestrian intersection in the city after Yonge and Dundas. However, any changes would likely have to wait until after the Eglinton-Crosstown LRT is completed in 2023, Reid said.

Other candidates include Bay and Queen streets, and King and Jarvis streets, where twice as many pedestrians as cars cross daily.

Debates about location aside, Reid said he believes the city needs to send a message to pedestrians that they haven't been forgotten.

"Without some kind of positive gesture, this comes across as saying Toronto belongs to cars again," he said. "I don't think that's what they mean to say, but unless they get their act together and do something about it, that's how it's going to be perceived."

Quoted

"They're losing track of the fact that scrambles are working well in other parts of the city and could be applied elsewhere."

Walk Toronto spokesman Dylan Reid on the city's decision to remove the pedestrian scramble at Bay and Bloor.

TTC must control non-revenue fleet, gas cards: Tory

Mayor John Tory says he will be like a dog on a bone making sure the TTC implements 21 recommendations to remedy poor management of its non-revenue fleet and the gas cards used to fill the tanks of those non-transit vehicles.

A city auditor's damning report that went to the TTC audit committee last week shows the transit agency had not been monitoring use and maintenance of its non-revenue fleet or the 441 gas cards dispensed to employees.

The auditor's report found that the lack of a co-ordinated purchasing and review process meant TTC vehicles weren't being maintained on a cost-effective basis and some were being replaced with less than 10,000 kilometres of use.

As for the gas cards, the TTC charged about $2 million annually on them but didn't properly monitor the 2,261 personal identification numbers issued to TTC employees authorized to use them.

As far back as 2004, an audit found that controls over fuel card purchases were "deficient," says the report.

Tory called the auditor's report evidence of an "entrenched culture of non-accountability."

"We're talking about $65 million of public assets that are not being maintained properly," he said.

While that culture predates TTC CEO Andy Byford, Tory said he's asked the transit chief to expedite the audit's 21 recommendations for better tracking procedures and quality controls before year's end.

The mayor said he has no regrets about pushing for more TTC funding this year to restore previously-cut buses and boost service.

"I know we had to restore these services," he said.

However, Tory said, "it's terribly dismaying" that every dollar wasted means there is one less dollar for his SmartTrack transit expansion plan or other transit improvements.

Byford was not available for comment. But chief operating officer Gary Shortt said the TTC was aware of the auditor's recommendations and was working to reform its practices.

A fleet manager hired last year is co-ordinating purchase and maintenance of non-revenue vehicles, and new inventory controls and procedures are being implemented.

"There were controls in place for the gas cards. They just weren't being followed to the letter. There were gaps," Shortt said.

TTC chairman Josh Colle said he was troubled by the audit findings, particularly as they had been identified in previous reports.

It speaks to the need to do a better job of managing the transit agency, he said.

But Colle said he expects more evidence of poor management to surface.

"As we dig in and look at some of these systems, we'll find there will be more," he said.

Mayor John Tory THE CANADIAN PRESS

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

TTC chairman takes flak over Twitter comments

Controversy. Josh Colle's 'real people aren't on Twitter' remark doesn't sit well with the Twitterati

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD
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TTC board chairman Josh Colle's name was trending yesterday on Twitter — but not out of praise.

Instead, he was being taken to task by the Twitterati for saying that "real people aren't on Twitter."

The comments, made to the media, were quickly posted to Twitter and attacked by others as the words of a "troll."

Coun. Norm Kelly took a more tongue-in-cheek reaction, sending Colle a Pinocchio meme with the phrase "I'm a real boy!"

Colle said the comments were made in jest and were in reaction to a tweet from Toronto Hydro putting full responsibility for a morning subway shutdown on the TTC. The TTC had earlier suggested flooding at a hydro substation had played a role.

Colle told reporters: "I try to stay as far away from Twitter as possible. That's just inside baseball. Real people want real solutions."

"I said them quite flippantly," Colle later told Metro about his comments, adding that he wasn't suggesting Toronto Hydro isn't real.

Colle himself has a Twitter account.

But, he added, Twitter is used by only a slice of the population.

"In this place, we get so uptight about: 'What's the Twitter world saying?'" he said.

Josh Colle admitted his comments about Twitter were "flippant." Colle's name was trending yesterday on Twitter over a remark where he said, "real people aren't on Twitter." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

York University professor Dennis Pilon agreed Colle's comment lacked tact, but said his point has merit.

"Well, no one likes to be told they're not real," Pilon said. "But you can't use Twitter as a proxy for public opinion.

"Twitter tends to be a more focused space," he added. "The general public out there, suffering with the subway not working, is probably not as engaged on Twitter as those for whom politics are a passion or a profession."

WITH FILES FROM LUKE SIMCOE

Quoted

"For the thousands of seniors in my ward who rely on the elevator at Lawrence West Station or are concerned with the upkeep of our roads or wheel transit in the TTC, they're just not using that form of communication."

Josh Colle, TTC chair

Bombardier to fast-track streetcar rollout

A Bombardier LRV, designed for Toronto's transit commission. There should be 30 new Bombardier streetcars on Toronto streets by the end of this year.
THE CANADIAN PRESS/HANDOUT

There should be 30 new Bombardier streetcars on Toronto streets by the end of this year, under a revised delivery schedule worked out between the TTC and the manufacturer.

But the chairman of the TTC board says he'll be scouring the city's contract with Bombardier looking for ways that Toronto could recoup some of the cost of keeping its old streetcars running longer than expected.

"I and others are looking at the contract very closely," Josh Colle said Monday.

Although some penalties are built into the $1.2-billion streetcar purchasing contract, he said he was surprised the language wasn't stronger. He dismissed, however, the possibility of legal action.

"At the end of the day, we don't want to get into a leverage spat with the provider of those vehicles. We want them on the road, so that's the focus of the conversation right now," he said.

TTC riders have been shivering at stops this winter as the TTC struggles to keep its old streetcars in service. The vehicles' pneumatic brake lines and sanders frequently fail in extreme cold, while the new models have operated well.

The new delivery schedule still requires Bombardier to deliver all 204 of the promised low-floor streetcars to the TTC by 2019.

Mayor John Tory said he's offered to help the TTC pressure Bombardier to expedite the schedule, but it's not clear at this point what the weight of his office can do.

"If I thought my getting on a plane (to Thunder Bay or the Bombardier headquarters in Montreal) would help, I'd be on a plane the next day," he said. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Christie Pits park to get $700K facelift

Makeover at Christie Pits will improve events like this. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Community. Renovations expected to start in fall 2015

GILBERT NGABO
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Christie Pits is set for a $700,000 makeover that's expected to include a new permanent stage for community events.

Revitalization will also include a new community hub around the park's bake oven with improved seating next to the kids' play area, Coun. Mike Layton said Monday.

"A lot of people like to go to the park with their families and set up little picnics," he said.

"The oven itself is not in great shape and no longer meets the city standards, and we'll eventually have to fix it." The same seating improvements will be added around the fire pit, too, he said.

Makeover plans include replacing existing steep walkways leading into the park with more accessible, safer pathways that have gentler slopes. Both the basketball court and the baseball diamond will also see upgrades, he added. Installing a permanent stage around which people can centre community events in vital, Layton said.

Renovations are expected to start in fall 2015 with much of the work done by spring 2016.

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TV. Former mayor Rob Ford may have inspired a character in new series

The ignoble exploits of a certain former Toronto mayor often seemed like a made-up Hollywood story.

Now they appear to have inspired an episode of the new CBS/Global series Battle Creek, which features a Rob Ford-like character whose penchant for parties and drugs gets him into a mess of trouble.

Josh Duhamel (Transformers, Las Vegas) and Dean Winters (30 Rock, Oz) star as two mismatched law enforcement officers who butt heads over just about everything.

Comedian Patton Oswalt makes a guest appearance in episode six as a drug-addled mayor with an overbearing brother who micromanages his career.

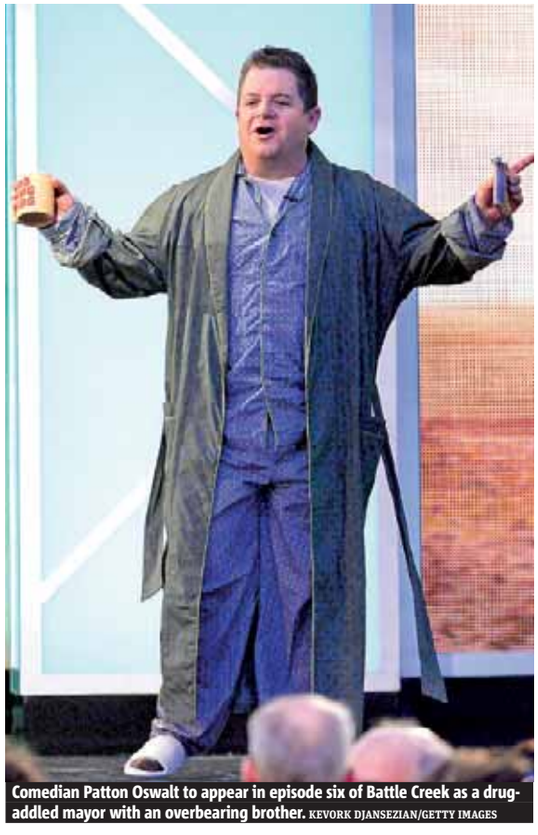
Duhamel traces the dig to series co-creator David Shore, who is Canadian.

"Well, he's from Toronto, I think that it was sort of an homage to Rob Ford," Duhamel said Monday during a stop in Toronto to promote the series with Winters.

"Which I thought was great and I thought Patton Oswalt was fantastic. It's one of my favourite guest stars that we had." Winters said he hopes Ford, now a Toronto city councillor, will take the tribute episode in stride.

Battle Creek debuts Sunday.

THE CANADIAN PRESS


Comedian Patton Oswalt to appear in episode six of Battle Creek as a drug-addled mayor with an overbearing brother. KEVORK DJANSEZIAN/GETTY IMAGES

Music. Massey Hall's $135M makeover begins

As Charles Cutts stood behind a lectern Monday on Massey Hall's hallowed stage to officially launch the building's $135-million "revitalization," a piece of grey fluff fell from the ceiling and drifted slowly to the floor, landing somewhere between the first and second rows, stage right.

"Massey Hall is not only a national historic site that we all treasure, but a place where Canadian music history is made," said the outgoing CEO and president of Massey Hall and Roy Thomson Hall. "It's been that way for the last 120 years and will be for the next 120."

It wasn't immediately clear for how many of those years the dust bunny had been gathering, but it was a fitting time for it to take flight.

For all its past glories, the hall has a shopworn feel, with those odd reclining seats and scuffed brass railings. The goal of the expensive facelift, paid for largely by corporate and government cash, is to do some sprucing up without sanding away the antique beauty of the place. "Change nothing, but improve everything" is the project's motto.

As Cutts formally announced on Monday, Massey Hall will undergo a seven-year renovation overseen by Toronto's KPMB Architects.

Phase 1, now underway, will see the construction of the hall's first ever loading dock (grand pianos and lighting equipment are still hauled in through the front doors), along with a new two-storey basement and expanded backstage space. Estimated price tag: $32 million. The federal and provincial governments are each contributing $8 million to this portion of the renovation.

Massey Hall will close during Phase 2 of the restoration for between 18 and 24 months, but not until 2019 at the earliest, Cutts said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

History

Opened in 1894, the building's bright red doors and wrought-iron fire escapes have become instantly recognizable.

- The 2,752-seat hall has hosted a who's-who of musicians, from jazz artists like Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie (whose 1953 recording at Massey is considered one of the genre's greatest) to Bob Dylan and Bruce Springsteen.

Geddy Lee of Rush, left, speaks with radio host Alan Cross at the Massey Hall revitalization Phase 1 celebration in Toronto Monday. GALIT RODAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Transit

Downtown relief line is the most needed: Poll

The transit project that a new poll says is Toronto voters' No. 1 priority is the one least likely to come to fruition any time soon.

According to a Forum poll, 29 per cent of voters picked the downtown relief line as the city's most urgent priority out of six projects presented. The results for the other five projects were: Scarborough subway (19 per cent), Eglinton Crosstown (12 per cent), SmartTrack (11 per cent), the Union-Pearson Express (eight per cent) and the Finch LRT (five per cent).

Aside from SmartTrack, an important part of Mayor John Tory's campaign, and the DRL, the other transit projects mentioned in the poll are currently in the works. SmartTrack is being studied, while there is no formal plan or funding source for a DRL.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

'Flash philanthropy': What happens to all the money?

Elijah Marsh. Crowdfunded donations, after tragic death of boy, 3, prompt new questions

A girl who lives in the neighbourhood came with her mother to light some candles Friday at a makeshift memorial put together in front of the apartment building where Elijah Marsh's grandmother lives on Neptune Drive. Within days, an online fundraiser launched by a stranger to pay for his funeral raised more than $173,000. RICHARD LAUTENS/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Within 24 hours of Elijah Marsh's distressing death, $120,000 had been given to an online fundraiser launched by a stranger to pay for his funeral. Within days, thousands of donors had pushed the total to more than $173,000 — nearly eight times the original goal of $20,000, and far more than will be needed for a memorial.

The family responded with humble grace and gratitude, saying they'd felt supported and loved through the outpouring of public sympathy after losing their three-year-old boy, who will be buried Saturday.

Toronto rallied. Canadians rallied. People everywhere did what they could — they gave. Their "flash philanthropy" now prompts uncomfortable questions: What will happen to all this money? What should happen to it?

Justin Kozuch, who set up the fundraiser on Tilt, told Torstar News Service in an email that he "would love to see a scholarship or a grant be established in Elijah's name, or a donation to a community organization," but will leave it to the family to decide.

"We could have simply turned off the campaign when we reached that goal (of $20,000)," Kozuch explained. "However, I wanted to ensure that everyone who wanted to make a donation had the opportunity to do so."

What to do with such generosity is, perhaps, a unique question in the age of social media. "Crowdfunding," before it got the name, was once a more personal, face-to-face process, carried out by churches or neighbours or community groups, and typically with a kind of discretion, sensitivity, trust — and perhaps proportionality — that online campaigns can lack.

Online crowdfunding has rapidly become a refuge for public mourning following tragic events. Whether they befall individuals, like Elijah, or millions of people — like during 2013's Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines — these incidents spur a collective grief that now seems to gravitate into the public square.

"It's flash philanthropy," said Michael Johnston, one of the earliest innovators in online fundraising. "It's not rational giving. It's more emotional. People just say, 'Oh, my God.'"

Johnston, the founder and president of HJC, a global fundraising consulting firm, did his first online campaign with the Body Shop in the U.K. in 1995. Charities were early adopters of online fundraising, and studies show that people give between 40 and 100 per cent more when they donate online.

"Instead of $25, it's often $40 or $50.… That has held true, but no one's been able to explain why," said Johnston. "There are lots of possible explanations: It's easier than writing a cheque and putting it in the mail. You're also choosing how to spend your money; there's no telephone pressure."

Johnston consults with political parties as well, harnessing the well-documented Barack Obama strategy of raising millions through small individual contributions. When political donation limits forced parties to abandon large individual donors in favour of as many small contributions as possible, crowdfunding was the obvious solution, he said.

Digital fundraising didn't turn into a real powerhouse, however, until the arrival of social media. Whether it's the Ice Bucket Challenge to raise money for ALS research or Movember's moustache-growing contest for prostate cancer, online charity campaigns are going viral.

"I think where there was once a great focus on the 'funding' of crowdfunding, there is now a keen interest in — and recognition of the value of — the 'crowd,'" said Alexandra Stiver, a PhD candidate at the Open University in London, England, and one of the few academics to study crowdfunding.

"People increasingly recognize that there is great value in the process beyond simply funding," she wrote in an email. "Across our research, we see backers not just financially invested, but emotionally invested; 'the' project becomes 'our' project."

When campaigns gain rapid notoriety, they can spin out of control, as happened with Kony 2012, an online video campaign to pressure world leaders to end the decades-old Lord's Resistance Army insurgency in east Africa. Shortly after the movie was watched 100 million times, the film faced to a strong backlash and director Jason Russell suffered a breakdown.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Excess money prompts differing views

Online response

The surfeit of generosity toward the Marsh family also raised eyebrows, as forcefully expressed by one online commenter, "Vegas," who wrote on the Torstar website: "Obviously $10,000 would provide for an elaborate funeral service which will leave some $140 grand left over. In my view this should NOT go to the family. They should not get a windfall over the loss of a child. That money should go to some charity involving children. Nobody should profit over the death of a child — not even the family."

CP1976, on the other hand, responded: "Elijah's family has suffered a tremendous loss, and the financial burden does not just affect funeral costs, but loss of employment, bills, medical expenses. I also agree that the excess money raised, outside what would be used to cover the funeral/burial costs, could very well benefit from being put towards a children's charity. But to use the word 'profit,' I think is a bit out of context. No one is profiting from this. No money in the world will bring Elijah back."

‘It was a hoot’

Queen on Moose.
Scandalous in the ’70s, ‘amusing’ painting hangs in the recently reopened Canada House in London

It would appear there are some things that amuse royalty after all.

When Toronto contemporary artist Charles Pachter met the Queen recently in London, he informed Her Majesty that he had painted her in 1972 sitting on a moose. Controversial at the time, the image would become Pachter’s most famous piece.

The Queen beamed, said Pachter, and replied: “Oh, how amusing.”

“It was a hoot,” Pachter, 72, told Torstar News Service this week. “It was a great experience ... Just to be able to stand there, and here’s this woman who I deeply admire, who has dedicated her life to service — it was a very special moment in my career.”

Pachter was in London on Feb. 19 for the reopening of Canada House, home of Canada’s High Commission, which had undergone major renovations.

Originally titled Noblesse Oblige, Pachter’s painting has long been popularly known as Queen on Moose. As Pachter himself puts it, it has been “recognized as probably one of the most prominent pieces of post-colonial pop art.”

He says he fields numerous requests for prints each year and has painted the Queen in a number of scenarios that have proven popular with the masses.

“That image has literally gone all over the world,” said Pachter. “It’s a beloved image. People see that it is affectionate mischief; it’s not malevolent. It was just my way of making sense of this phenomenon of our evolving nature as a country from colony to nation.”

Pachter said he had been taught in school that the moose was “the monarch of the north,” and the idea came to him of having the Queen sit on one in a painting.

He said it caused a “scandal” when it was shown in June 1973, when reverence for the monarchy in Canada was still fairly high — so much so that his dealer refused to display it.

“In almost all of them, the Queen stares out, smiling vapidly in greeting to some offstage audience. In the background, a huge, antlered moose emerges, a shy but powerful brute, unaware and unconcerned with the Queen,” said a Toronto Star review of the exhibit.

Pachter said that as time went on and people began to recognize that the royals were not mythical creatures, the popularity of Queen on Moose surged.

“I did want to say to the Queen that, thanks to you, I’ve made a living for the last 40 years,” he said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Toronto’s Charles Pachter says the Queen told him his painting was ‘amusing.’ KIRSTY WIGGLESWORTH/POOL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Toronto high school students take their principal to court — and win

The law. Superior Court rules that a mandatory breathalyzer test at prom infringes on constitutional rights

In a precedent-setting decision, two Toronto high school students took their principal to court and won the battle against compulsory breath-testing at prom.

The Superior Court ruled in favour of the students Monday, stating a mandatory breathalyzer test at prom infringed on their constitutional rights.

Jonathan Lisus, a civil litigation lawyer who represented the students in a pro bono capacity, said the ruling was about more than just alcohol at school proms — it has cemented the fact that the charter, the supreme law of the land, applies to school authorities.

Never before have the courts ruled on the application of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in regard to the relationship between schools and students, Lisus said. The case first began back in April 2014, when Northern Secondary School principal Ron Felsen decided to roll out compulsory breath-testing at prom without consulting the school council.

Felsen said he was introducing mandatory breath-testing as a "last resort" to counteract a culture of intoxication at school dances, which had seen two students hospitalized.

Students Brett Gorski and Simon Gillies, the president and vice-president of the school council, disagreed with the decision and were offended Felsen had not consulted the student body before declaring the new rule. The pair began to research how mandatory breath-testing may impinge on their rights.

They contacted the Canadian Civil Liberties Association for guidance and were connected with Lisus, who helped them file a charter application against Felsen and the Toronto District School Board last May.

Simon Gillies and Brett Gorski, right, took on their school principal after he introduced mandatory breath-testing at the Northern Secondary School prom. CONTRIBUTED

On Monday, Ontario's Superior Court ruled the students had a reasonable expectation of privacy and that school authorities did not possess reasonable grounds to conduct this type of search and seizure.

Gorski, 18, told Torstar News Service she was "thrilled" with the ruling.

Speaking over the phone from Montreal, where she is now studying management, Gorski said the decision was a triumph for the whole student body.

Felsen said he had been "hopeful for a different outcome," but that he respected the court's decision. Breathalyzers would not be used at any upcoming proms, he said. The decision to enforce mandatory breath-testing was to identify those who were intoxicated and also to act as a deterrent, Felsen said, adding he always had the students' best interests at heart. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Quoted

"Students deserve to know that they have rights and, despite their age, they have the power to defend themselves."

Simon Gillies, former student at Northern Secondary School

Investigation

Tunnel found near Pan Am Games site

It was sophisticated, it was large enough to stand in, and it was dug near the Rexall Centre — the future tennis venue for Toronto's Pan Am and Parapan Am Games this summer.

Toronto police say a mysterious tunnel has been discovered in a wooded area just south of York University, happened upon by a Toronto and Region Conservation Authority employee walking near the TRCA headquarters at 5 Shoreham Dr..

The tunnel has since been filled in by authorities. Toronto Police Deputy Chief Mark Saunders, who heads the Specialized Operations Command unit, will be holding a press conference on the discovery Tuesday morning.

The intended use of the tunnel is not yet known. Torstar has confirmed that Canadian security officials have been informed about the discovery, which occurred last month.

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More than just a trim and shave

Barbershops. Local haircutting spots allow customers to hang out, watch sports or have a whiskey shot while waiting their turn

GILBERT NGABO
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When Sean Gibson took the reins of the Ontario Barber Association back in 2006, the group had fewer than 50 members.

Today, the association counts more than 500 registered members, about 200 of whom are in Toronto.

The membership boom is a basic lesson in the "fundamentals of business, supply and demand," Gibson said.

"The industry has grown exponentially over the last three years in Toronto and surrounding areas," he explained.

Barbershops seem, quite literally, to be popping up on streets from one end of the city to another — and there's no sign the trend will be cut off any time soon.

Quoted

"Men are going back to the basics of taking care of their own style."

Jeff James, owner of Gentleman's Lounge barbershop

"Men are going back to the basics of taking care of their own style, not allowing it to be dictated to them anymore," noted Rod, Gun & Barbers Gentlemen's Lounge owner Jeff James, adding that the success of retro shows such as Mad Men is a big influence.

James opened his shop about six months ago in the west end. Business, he said, has "exceeded my expectations."

The potential for growth is what caught his attention to begin with. A friend of his opened a shop a couple of years back and has been doing quite well.

It's not just your average hair experience at Rod, Gun & Barbers Gentlemen's Lounge barbershop. Along with a bit of booze, the shop offers Boris as another perk. The French bulldog belongs to the shop's owner, Jeff James.

DAVID VAN DYKE/METRO

Like many of the shops cropping up these days, James' gentlemen's lounge is more than just a place to get a trim and shave.

James offers up pints and whiskey shots to waiting customers, which means the shop has become a bit of a hangout for people who live nearby. Others spots take on sports themes, offering a place to tune into the game while getting the latest look, while others have expanded to offer things like "The Caveman Special."

Available at Man Cave Barbers Lounge, the package includes a massage, an eyebrow spruce up, a facial and a manipedi.

While they may be serving up some fancy things on the side these days, Gibson stresses that it's important for barbers to have all those basic skills that set them apart from what he considers ordinary hairdressers.

"There's an exponential supply of hairstylists that cannot cut your hair properly," he said. "It's tragic."

The Ontario College of Trades does not recognize barber as a separate trade, amalgamating them with hairstylist. It's somewhat upsetting for Gibson and members of his association.

"It could lead to losing the very art of barbering," he said.

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AGENTSOFCHANGE

Eleven Torontonians who are building a better city

This is the final part of a series exploring how 11 groups and individuals plan to make Toronto a better place through the Centre for Social Innovation's Agents of Change program. Each is being set up for a year with tools ranging from work space to contacts, all aimed at turning ideas into reality.

Building a better toilet for less

Marc Soberano has become an unintentional spokesman for toilets.

The Toilet Guy, as many are now calling him, is the founder of Building Up, which fits low-income housing with retrofitted showerheads, faucets and toilets to save both water and money.

It trains members of the low-income housing community to do the work instead of hiring a private contractor. Buildings can also pay for the retrofits through savings.

Each retrofit costs $300 to $350 per unit, which can add up if you have a 200-unit building, Soberano said. So, if the retrofit saves $100 per unit over the year, the owner would pay over three years and reap the benefits of the savings thereafter.

Marc Soberano. CONTRIBUTED

As an agent of change, Building Up will run a pilot project this year, selecting three applicants to work on some 400 units across the city. Employees will have nine days of hands-on training and spend every other Friday at an in-class session with the Learning Enrichment Foundation.

The curriculum comes directly from Ashoka Canada, which is the model for Building Up. It offers trades-based math, intro to plumbing and soft skills like financial management.

Soberano hopes a successful pilot project will encourage others to implement Building Up's services. He also hopes to work with the Toronto Community Housing Corporation.

"People are literally flushing money down the toilet," Soberano said.

Building Up has made Soberano — who traversed 5,000 kilometres of old fur-trading trails by canoe in 2013 — even more aware of water as a resource.

Bridging divides one ramp at a time

Luke Anderson wants a barrier-free Toronto.

Anderson, who has used a wheelchair since suffering a spinal cord injury in 2002, said he used to avoid restaurants and businesses he couldn't get in to. He sometimes waits up to an hour to receive assistance from wheelchair lifts.

"Single-step storefronts are the same as storefronts with five, six, a dozen steps," he said. "It doesn't matter. A step is a huge barrier that prevents independent access."

To combat this, Anderson — a structural engineer — founded StopGap, which uses donated materials and volunteer manpower to create cost-free ramps for storefronts with single-step entryways. Shops with more complicated entryways can also apply for Ramps on Request, a division of StopGap that builds more complex ramps.

Luke Anderson (left) CONTRIBUTED

StopGap has built more than 500 ramps between Halifax and Prince George in the last three years. Some 300 of those are in Toronto.

Anderson's ramps have been embraced universally, which is part of his mission. From parents with strollers and travelers with suitcases, anyone can benefit. "Barrier-free elements can be integrated into the design of a space so that everyone can use them without even knowing they're using them," Anderson said.

The way forward

"As the name suggests they're a stopgap solution to this huge issue. They're a means to an end, and that end is permanent."

Luke Anderson, founder of StopGap

Not your nana's sex ed

Education. The new Ontario curriculum, unveiled by the Liberal government on Monday, starts the conversation earlier — covering topics such as sexual consent, sexual orientation, gender identity and safe online behaviour, to name a few

More in-depth at a younger age

JESSICA SMITH CROSS
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The days are long gone when sex ed was left only for red-faced parents to have "the talk" or silently slip a brochure to their kids.

Thanks largely to the Internet, kids are learning about all things sex earlier than ever, and Ontario's new sex-ed curriculum is driven by that.

The curriculum update, the first since 1998, was unveiled yesterday and is expected to hit classrooms in September, unless protests from religious and parents-rights groups convince the government to change course.

It includes new information about sexual consent, sexual orientation, gender identity and safe online behaviour, such as the risks of sexting.

It teaches some of the same sex-ed basics Ontario kids have been learning at a younger age and goes into more depth on some things.

Some of the major changes

- Students will learn words such as penis and vagina in Grade 1, at the same time they learn the names of all other body parts. Kids are already learning about body parts in Grade 1, but the old curriculum didn't specifically address genitals. Using the proper names is meant to help students tell an adult if they've been abused or injured.
- Students in Grade 2 have always been taught that "no" means no, and they should tell someone if someone touches them inappropriately, but the new curriculum builds on that in subsequent years to teach kids about sexual consent.
- The curriculum focuses more on sexual orientation and gender expression. In Grade 3, students will learn about same-sex relationships.
- Because kids are going through puberty earlier now than they used to, the puberty discussion will begin in Grade 4, rather than Grade 5. Also in Grade 4, students will learn about online safety, including the risks posed when asked for sexual pictures online.
- Masturbation will be discussed in Grade 6. The new curriculum says students who ask questions about it should be told it's a normal way to learn about their bodies. Students will also learn about sexual consent in Grade 6 and how "yes means yes" works in a healthy relationship.
- Students have always learned about pregnancy and sexually-transmitted infections in Grade 7, but the new curriculum adds specific lessons about anal and oral sex. They'll also learn about the repercussions of sexting.

We asked some of the major players in the Ontario sex-ed debate how they first learned about sex, and how they think kids today should learn. Here's what they said:

Liz Sandals, education minister

THE CANADIAN PRESS

"I'm a grandma, so sex ed was something you didn't mention at all when I was a student. It really was Mom."

Sandals said sex ed has evolved over generations as the age of puberty drops.

Her children, now in their 30s, were taught many of the same concepts that are in the current curriculum by a public health nurse at their school. But the world has changed with "smartphones and Snapchat," she said, so the new curriculum is needed to ensure the safety and health of students.

Monte McNaughton, Lambton-Kent-Middlesex MPP

"I mean, luckily I had parents who talked to me, but first and foremost we had (sex education in school). I'm 37-years-old, and we had the V.I.P. Program it was called back in Grade 6, that's my recollection of the beginning."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

McNaughton is running for leadership of the PC Party. He opposes the new curriculum, and says parents should have a greater say. The program he mentioned, called V.I.P.—which stands for Values, Influences and Peers — was created by the Ontario government in 1982 and is now considered outdated.

Chris Markham, of Ontario Physical and Health Education Association

CONTRIBUTED

"Like a lot of people, I was part of the old generation where it was a lot of schoolyard stuff. You pick it up on the schoolyard, you hear from friends, that type of thing."

Markham's association helped the government develop the new curriculum.

He sees it as an improvement over his experiences because it brings the conversation about sex into classrooms and addresses questions that are pressing to kids these days.

Mary Ellen Douglas, Ontario president of Campaign Life Coalition

"I learned from my parents and from my faith background."

Douglas opposes the new curriculum, saying it gives students information that's too graphic, at too young of an age. She also said it usurps parents' rights to teach these issues to their children. "You explain to them that there's a special place for a baby to come into the world and that's all they need to know," she said.

CONTRIBUTED

Propaganda definition too broad in terror bill: Experts

A federal proposal, to scrub terrorist propaganda from the Internet, risks the deletion of speech that has no ties to violent threats, says a new analysis.

The definition of propaganda in the government anti-terrorism bill is dangerously broad, law professors Craig Forcese and Kent Roach say in their paper.

The bill, introduced late last month, proposes giving the RCMP power to seek a judge's order to remove terrorist propaganda from websites.

Forcese, of the University of Ottawa, and Roach, who teaches at the University of Toronto, say while they support the idea in principle, it should be rooted in actual or threatened violence.

Conservatives brought in the bill — which would also significantly expand the powers of Canada's spy agency — following the daylight murders of two Canadian soldiers last October.

The Canadian Security Intelligence Service would become an agency that tries to derail terror plots, not just one that collects and analyzes information. The bill would create a new criminal offence of encouraging someone to carry out a terror attack.

The New Democrats oppose the bill, calling it a serious infringement on civil liberties that will not be effective in reducing terrorism. The Liberals have agreed to support it with the caveat that they will bring in stronger oversight of the intelligence agencies should they form the next government.

In the House of Commons, Public Safety Minister Steven Blaney said the jihadi extremists' threat is real. "That is why we need to move on and put measures in place to keep Canadians safe." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Greyhound killing. Group home suggested for man who beheaded passenger

Experts are recommending a man who beheaded a fellow passenger aboard a Greyhound bus should be transferred from a mental facility to a Winnipeg hospital with an eye to moving him to a community group home.

It's also being suggested that Vince Li be granted unescorted outings in the city. Li's psychiatrist, Dr. Steven Kremer, told a criminal code board review hearing Monday that Li has shown "profound improvement" and is at low risk to re-offend. Risk assessments done by other doctors came to the same conclusion, the board heard.

Vince Li THE CANADIAN PRESS

Li, 46, has not had any hallucinations in over a year and understands the need to take his medication, Kremer said. Should Li be transferred to a group home, staff there would ensure he continued the medication necessary to manage his schizophrenia, the doctor said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Left to right: Aileen Joseph, Sue Martin, Nancy Britian and Beverly Jacobs take part in a national candlelight vigil on Parliament Hill in 2009 to honour missing or murdered aboriginal women. Martin's daughter, Terrie, was killed in Calgary in 2002, and no one has been charged for the crime. A roundtable dedicated to addressing the key themes of the issue, including prevention and awareness, will be held in Ottawa on Friday. FRED CHARTRAND/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Roundtable set to address missing, murdered women

Aboriginal issues.
Groups and activists still pushing for national inquiry

Every year on April 29, Sue Martin marks her daughter Terrie's death by holding a vigil where she cooks and invites family members over to pray and share stories about loved ones.

Terrie was 24 when she was murdered in her Calgary home in 2002 while her children were in their rooms. She had been severely beaten, but to this day no one has been charged for the crime. Martin believes there need to be tougher laws and more police resources to deal with killings involving aboriginal women like her daughter.

"We need more education for our women, and more safe places for our women to go," Martin said, referring to shelters for female aboriginals.

Those are some of the things Martin wants to see come out of Friday's roundtable in Ottawa on missing and murdered aboriginal women. The roundtable will bring together representatives from the provinces and territories, national aboriginal groups, and the federal government.

The aboriginal groups attending include the Assembly of First Nations, the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, and the Native Women's Association of Canada. Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt and Status of Women Minister Kellie Leitch have also said they'll be participating. The roundtable is being held amid repeated calls for a broader national inquiry.

Themes

The roundtable will address key themes including prevention and awareness, police and justice system responses, and "community safety plans and protocols."

Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government is instead devoting $5 million a year for five years toward an "action plan" to end violence against aboriginal women, and says a national missing persons DNA index will also help address the problems.

Dawn Harvard, interim president of the Native Women's Association of Canada, noted that provincial leaders such as Premier Kathleen Wynne understand the missing and murdered aboriginal women's issue is "a crisis" even though the federal government doesn't see things that way.

"How do you have these (different) views of reality?" asked Harvard, a member of the Wikwemikong First Nation on Manitoulin Island, who will be at the table. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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U.S. and Iran talk nuclear

Tehran. Iranian officials say they don't want arms, just enrichment for energy, medical and scientific purposes

Edging toward a historic compromise, the U.S. and Iran reported progress Monday on a deal that would clamp down on Tehran's nuclear activities for at least 10 years but then slowly ease restrictions on programs that could be used to make atomic arms.

Officials said there were still obstacles to overcome before a March 31 deadline, and any deal will face harsh opposition in both countries. It also would be sure to further strain already-tense U.S. relations with Israel, whose leaders oppose any agreement that doesn't end Iran's nuclear ambitions.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is expected to strongly criticize the deal in an address before Congress next week.

Still, a comprehensive pact could ease 35 years of U.S-Iranian enmity — and seems within reach for the first time in more than a decade of negotiations.

"We made progress," U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said as he bade farewell to members of the American delegation at the table with Iran. More discussions between Iran and the six nations engaging it were set for next Monday, a senior U.S. official said.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said the sides found "a better understanding" at the negotiating table.

Western officials familiar with the talks cited movement but also described the discussions as a moving target, meaning changes in any one area would have repercussions for other parts of the negotiation.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sinkhole in Naples, Italy forces 380 to leave area

This photo taken Sunday shows a view from above of the chasm that opened Saturday and enlarged in the night, forcing about 380 people to leave the Pianura district of Naples, Italy.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Missing. Three U.K. girls possibly headed to Syria

Turkish police searched Monday for three missing British schoolgirls believed to be headed to Syria to join the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) extremist group as their frightened families issued urgent pleas begging the girls to return home.

The girls, said to be "straight-A students" from the same east London school, disappeared last Tuesday without leaving any messages. Authorities said they boarded a Turkish Airlines plane to Istanbul.

The relatives of Shamima Begum and Amira Abase, both 15, and Kadiza Sultana, 16, broke down in tears as they spoke of their fears on TV.

"We miss you. We cannot stop crying," said Abase Hussen, Amira's father, clutching a teddy bear Amira gave to her mother on Mother's Day. "Please think twice. Don't go to Syria." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

France. Six barred from travel to join extremists

France has barred six people from leaving the country because they wanted to join extremists in Syria, the first such travel ban under a new law aimed at keeping French radicals from gaining violent experience abroad.

Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve says some 40 others will face travel bans in the coming weeks. He did not name the six.

The bans issued Monday are the first since a sweeping anti-terrorism law passed last year. The government is especially worried since attacks in Paris last month killed 20 people, including three gunmen claiming ties to Islamic extremists in Syria and Yemen.

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Nepal to improve safety on Everest

Kathmandu. Nation works to improve conditions for climbers after avalanche last April killed 16 guides

The last light of the day sets on Mount Everest as it rises behind Mount Nuptse. KEVIN FRAYER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nepal is improving its weather forecasting, stepping up security and promising swift rescues if needed during the upcoming climbing season on Everest in an attempt to recover from the worst mountaineering disaster on the world's highest peak last year.

Fees for individual climbers will also be cut to lure back climbers after last year's season was abandoned due to grief and safety concerns following an avalanche near base camp last April that killed 16 local guides.

For the three-month climbing season that begins in March, the government will ensure safer conditions for both international climbers and Nepalese guides and will set up a camp for officials at base camp, said Puspa Raj Katuwal.

"We are working on plans to improve the conditions on the mountain this year," said Katuwal. The Nepalese government has been criticized for not having a presence at the base camp and doing too little despite earning millions in fees.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"The risk has become truly too great."

Adrian Ballinger of the California-based Alpenglow Expeditions. The firm is ceasing operations on Everest's south side, in Nepal, and shifting to the north face, in China, due to one treacherous section on the south.

Texas. Prognosis good for 10-month-old twin girls separated by surgery

Doctors are optimistic that 10-month-old conjoined twin girls will survive the surgery that has separated them.

It took 26 hours last week to separate the girls, Knatalyne Hope Mata and Adeline Faith, who shared a chest wall, lungs, a part of their heart lining, diaphragm, liver, colon, intestines and pelvic area, according to surgeon Darrell Cass. The surgery, which took place at Texas Children's Hospital in Houston, had been planned since before they were born.

They are in stable but critical condition.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Surgery brings hope

The conjoined condition of the twin girls was discovered during a routine ultrasound.

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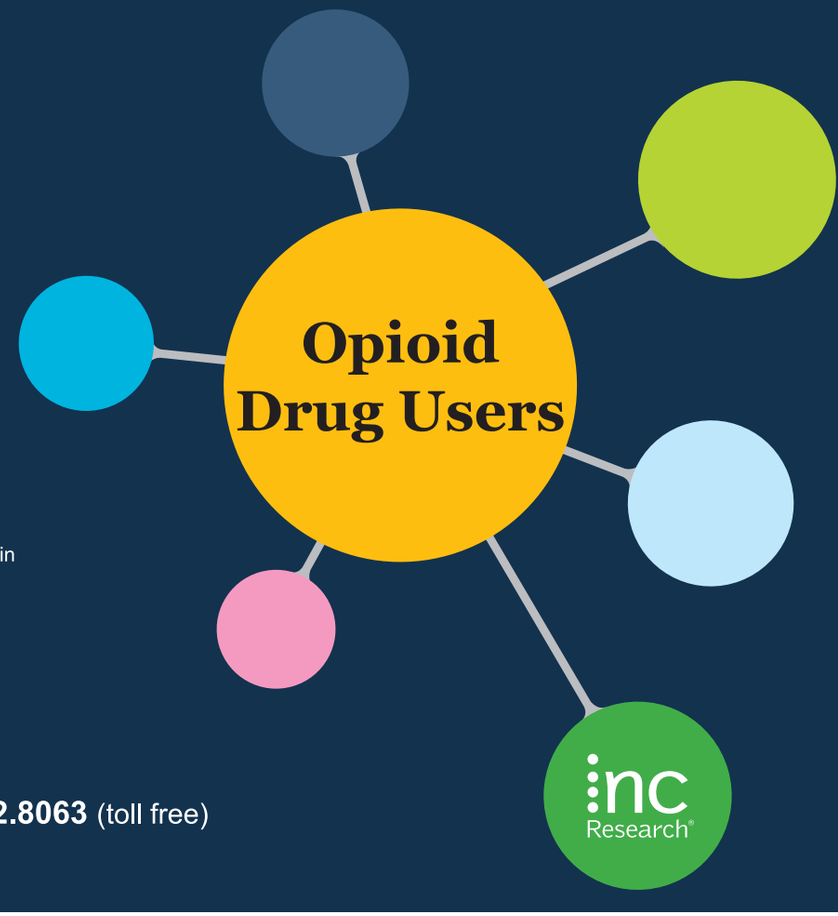
Study consists of one screening visit, one qualification session, five 3-day in-clinic treatment visits, and one follow-up visit.

Eligible subjects will receive up to $4265 in financial compensation for participation in this clinical trial.



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Labour force. Women key to healthy economy: IMF

Countries that hold women back from the workforce are actually hurting their economies and contributing to lost productivity despite slowing global growth, says a new report from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The estimated gain in gross domestic product (GDP) for countries that close their gender gaps ranges from 15 to 35 per cent, says the study released Monday.

The gender equity issue was pushed into the spotlight Sunday night at the Academy Awards after an impassioned plea from Patricia Arquette, who won the best supporting actress award for her role as an impoverished single mother in the movie Boyhood.

"To every woman who gave birth, to every taxpayer and citizen of this nation, we have fought for everybody else's equal rights. It's time to have wage equality once and for all," she said to rousing applause in her offbeat acceptance speech that brought cheering fellow actresses Meryl Streep and Jennifer Lopez to their feet.

Losses in GDP due to economic gender gaps range from about 15 per cent in several countries, including Greece, Italy and Japan, to about 35 per cent in Qatar, Iran and the United Arab Emirates, the document shows, adding the losses would result in similar increases in GDP if gender gaps were removed.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Legal restrictions

The IMF study found that despite progress on gender equity, almost 90 per cent of countries still have at least one legal restriction based on gender, and 28 countries have 10 or more such laws. (Canada is not on either list.)

- Restrictions include limits on women's property rights and laws that allow husbands to prevent their wives from working or ban women from entering certain professions.

Apple. Renewable energy to power data centres

Apple says it's investing 1.7 billion euros (about $2.43 billion) in data centres in Denmark and Ireland that will be powered by renewable energy, its largest such project in Europe to date.

The hubs will power Apple Inc.'s online services, including iTunes Store, App Store, iMessage, Maps and Siri voice services.

Apple said Monday that last year it spent more than 7.8 billion euros on European companies and suppliers, supporting some 670,000 jobs in the region. Apple's own employees number 18,300 people in 19 European countries.

Apple said the data centres, scheduled to begin operations in 2017, will have the lowest environmental impact of any of its data centres and will use renewable energy, including wind power.

They will be based in central Denmark's Jutland region and County Galway in Ireland. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market Minute

DOLLAR
79.52¢ US (-0.19¢)

TSX
15,200.26 (+28.02)

OIL
$49.45 US (-$1.36)

GOLD
$1,200.80 US (-$4.10)

Natural gas: $2.879 (-7.2¢)
Dow Jones: 18,116.90 (-23.60)

CRTC

Bell seeks to appeal mobile TV ruling

Bell Mobility has asked the Federal Court of Appeal that it be allowed to appeal a Jan. 29 CRTC ruling, which called the service provider's pricing model for its mobile TV app "unlawful" because it effectively made mobile TV services from other providers artificially more expensive and thereby uncompetitive.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Molly Maid workers clean a client's downtown Toronto apartment Friday. Molly Maid president Kevin Hipkins says tech-based disruptive companies like Handy, HomeJoy or TaskRabbit are merely ways to evade taxes — getting around the employer-employee rule, and calling them subcontractors.

ANDREW FRANCIS WALLACE/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Sharing economy blamed for creating 'culture of tax cheats'

Underground economy. Tech companies like Uber are emerging in other sectors such as cleaning services

The sharing economy might be getting lots of buzz, but Kevin Hipkins thinks it's just creating "a culture of tax cheats."

Hipkins, president of Molly Maid, a Mississauga-based cleaning services company, says these new "disruptive" tech companies such as Handy and Homejoy, funded through the deep pockets of venture capital, are not playing by the rules.

Because these companies consider the cleaner, handyman or furniture assembler to be independent contractors, they're not employees, and therefore not subject to significant employer contributions for items such as employment insurance or Canada Pension Plan.

Molly Maid, with about 1,200 employees, operating in all provinces except Quebec, ends up at a disadvantage when it comes to its profit model, compared to these new companies, Hipkins said.

He concedes that cleaning services and cleaners have long represented a huge chunk of the underground economy — some estimates peg it at more than $3 billion a year in Canada.

Hipkins believes there's a difference when it's a small under-the-table arrangement between a client and individual cleaner, versus a large U.S. company, with millions in market capitalization.

Handy, which launched in Toronto last April and in Vancouver in June, says it is absolutely not evading taxes.

"Handy aims to be compliant with all local laws irrespective of jurisdiction," the company said in an email, arguing the Handy model allows professionals to choose their hours, work and schedule.

Homejoy, a California-based company, was operating in Toronto, but suspended service here late last year. It did not respond to a request for comment.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Tobacco firms fight ads calling them liars

America's biggest tobacco companies asked a federal appeals court Monday to set aside a series of court-ordered advertisements saying they lied about the dangers of smoking.

The companies told a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit that they're ready and willing to pass along factual public health information about cigarettes, but said they won't go along with being forced to underwrite an ad campaign that would have the companies brand themselves as liars.

The statements imply "that we're still engaged in aspects of wrongdoing … (and) that we do things that we don't do," Miguel Estrada, an attorney representing the tobacco companies, told the panel.

In 2006, U.S. District Judge Gladys Kessler ordered the largest cigarette makers to publicly admit that they had lied for decades about the dangers of smoking. The ruling came after testimony from 162 witnesses, a nine-month bench trial and thousands of findings by the judge that defendants engaged in a massive campaign of fraud.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Advertisements

The preamble to the ads says a "federal court has ruled that Altria, R.J. Reynolds Tobacco, Lorillard and Philip Morris USA deliberately deceived the American public."

- **The ads would be in all cigarette packs sold for 12 weeks over the course of two years, in TV spots once per week for a year, in a separate newspaper ad by each company, on company websites indefinitely and at certain retail outlets.**

VOICES

THE EPIC WINDMILL JOURNEY

Coming to a parking lot near you: Environmentally friendly initiatives — but they're going to take way, way too long

YOUR RIDE
Glyn Bowerman

Who loves a parking lot?

You may use one, but your friendly neighbourhood Green P probably doesn't hold a special place in your heart.

Parking lots are easy to overlook: Functional, ubiquitous and typically unattractive.

But lots are also full of untapped potential. That's why, in 2007, the city announced design guidelines for "greening" surface parking lots. The guidelines were tested, tweaked and became the standard for new parking developments.

Now, the Toronto Parking Authority is proposing a greening plan to retrofit 130 of its lots in conjunction with scheduled repairs.

Parking lots present a number of environmental and safety concerns.

For instance, the large, black surfaces contribute to what is known as the "heat island effect." The asphalt absorbs heat, contributing to rising temperatures and smog alerts in urban environments.

Lots fail to absorb groundwater during thaws or storms, creating a dirty sort of runoff that can cause flooding and pollute Lake Ontario. Parking lots also fail to take pedestrians into account, rendering them unsafe.

And they're ugly. So very, very ugly.

With new technology, materials and a bit of greenery, lots can be made with reduced environmental impacts and safety hazards. With a bit of imagination — think bicycle parking and public art — these lots can become attractive public amenities.

You've seen them in farm fields and along the shores of Ontario lakes, but power-generating windmills could be coming to surface parking lots in Toronto under a plan pitched by the parking authority. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

The parking authority's initiative is great, and, if council approves the recommended 10-year capital plan, the work will be complete in, oh, 19 years. Yeah, that's 2034.

We're told we can build a subway to Scarborough by 2023. Mayor John Tory told us SmartTrack is possible in seven years. While greening city lots is a fantastic, timely idea, it hardly seems like an undertaking on the scale of a regional commuter service. What's the holdup?

A parking authority report says, given its existing staff resources, the fastest these lots can be retrofitted works out to about seven per year.

After years of budget cuts and "efficiencies," this sort of bottleneck is hardly surprising. City staff, in all departments, are asked to do a lot with a little — as we saw last week with the Bloor bike lane, study staff said they simply didn't have time to do.

It's great we're talking about greening these lots and that a plan is in place. But it's possible that, by the time the strategy is fully implemented, the world may have already moved on.

One of the most intriguing aspects of the design guidelines is the mention of incorporating "opportunities for off-grid power generation."

This could mean solar cells, or wind power generators, which could be used to charge an electric car and even generate power for the city.

Technology like this could really put parking lots to work for us — and put us ahead of the times.

But if we don't accelerate the plan, we may have brand new lots, just in time to be years behind the times.

DO YOU HAVE A TRANSIT IDEA?
Shoot us an email:
toronto@metronews.ca

Glyn Bowerman is a Toronto-based journalist and theatre artist. He is also a regular contributor to Spacing Magazine. Follow him on twitter @ Banquos_Banquet

When it comes to Gay-Straight Alliances, language matters

PAM KRAUSE
readers@metronews.ca

Language is important when discussing sexuality — and in a situation where we're trying to promote openness, being vague with the name of Gay-Straight Alliance clubs could backfire.

There have been a lot of conversations about GSAs in schools. Should they be mandatory, can schools opt out of them, and why are they necessary? Most recently, debate sprung up about what they should be called, with some schools in Alberta advocating for the term "diversity clubs."

Dropping terms such as gay, bisexual and lesbian further alienates an already marginalized group of teens by reinforcing the idea that different sexual orientations are something of which to be ashamed.

Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) have existed in North America since 1989 and are instrumental in creating a safer school environment. The clubs work specifically with LGBTQ youth, their allies and supportive teachers to create a safer space for teens, offering advocacy, support or education and awareness.

GSAs generally follow a guideline and there have been tool kits developed on what makes a GSA.

Decades of research and practice have given schools a recipe for ensuring a GSA can impact school culture in a positive way for all students.

It is critical that GSAs exist as a separate club devoted to LGBTQ culture. If we were to call these groups "diversity" clubs — a term that is vague and could suggest diversity of gender, ethnicity or ability — we'd be overlooking the unique experiences of what it means to be an LGBTQ youth.

And those experiences are indeed unique. In 2009, a Canadian Study by the human rights charity Egale found that three-quarters of LGB students and 95 per cent of transgender students felt unsafe at school, compared to only 20 per cent of straight students. GSAs have been instrumental in improving those numbers for LGBTQ teens. Research shows that the existence of GSAs in schools reduces the fear of discrimination among LGBTQ students, that there is less homophobic language in school hallways. More LGBTQ youth in GSA schools report knowing a teacher with whom they can talk safely.

Because these clubs are so important in promoting a feeling of inclusiveness for LGBTQ teens, and in promoting a sense of dialogue and understanding within the school community, we need to take them seriously.

We need to focus on building acceptance, and not simply settling for tolerance in our communities. Building safe communities for LGBTQ youth through healthy, open and honest Gay-Straight Alliance clubs is an important place to start. Beginning with their names. Because language matters.

Pam Krause is the president and CEO of the Calgary Sexual Health Centre

metro

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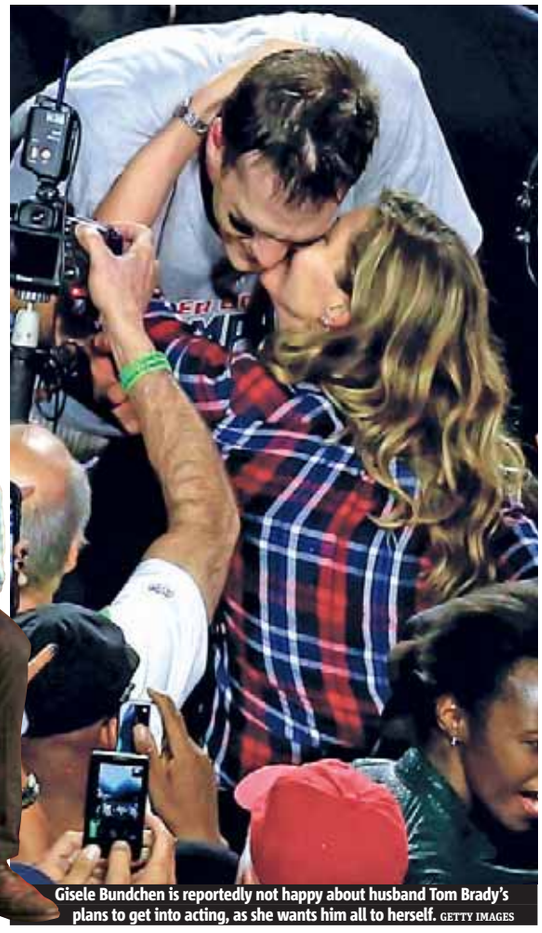
Gossip

NED EHRBAR

METRO'S TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES



Gisele Bundchen is reportedly not happy about husband Tom Brady's plans to get into acting, as she wants him all to herself. GETTY IMAGES

Gisele's not ready to let Hollywood have Tom

Hey Tom Brady, you were just named the NFL's Super Bowl MVP. What are you going to do now? Head for Hollywood, apparently. According to the fine, reputable folks at Star magazine, Brady is reportedly mulling over an acting career once he retires from football because why not? "At 37, Tom knows he only has a few seasons left before retirement. He's thinking ahead and believes he could become a huge movie star," a source says. "He's used to being a superstar. After winning the Super Bowl again, he's thinking about new challenges outside of football." Only one problem, though. His wife, Gisele Bundchen, is said to be not so hot on the idea, if only because of him potentially spending time on screen with attractive female co-stars. But let's not get ahead of ourselves, right?

Kylie and Tyga are more off than on

Tough breaks for Kylie Jenner. The 17-year-old reality personality has been "crying all week" over the state of her relationship with 25-year-old rapper Tyga, according to Radar Online. "She is afraid that Tyga is going to break up with her," a source explains.

And with good reason, I'd imagine, since Tyga himself said they aren't dating. And he's apparently been getting pressure from his management team to keep his distance from Jenner, which may or may not have something to do with the stink Amber Rose was raising about the pairing last week. "Tyga's advisers have told him to not be spotted out in public with Kylie doing anything romantic, including holding hands, or kissing," the source says.

"Tyga has tried to reassure Kylie that they are solid, but she has her doubts." And now I'm off to feel terrible about myself for spending this much time focusing on the dating life of a 17-year-old. Toodles!

Kylie Jenner GETTY IMAGES

Duff's divorce is proceeding at a snail's pace

Hilary Duff has finally filed for divorce from hockey player Mike Comrie a year after they initially announced their separation. And if that doesn't seem like a long enough time to get the paperwork in order, on the filing itself Duff lists their actual date of separation as January 2013, according to TMZ. But hey, you have to be methodical in these things, right? Duff cites the old standby, "irreconcilable differences," for the split, and she's looking to make sure he doesn't get any piece of her finances or earnings, since they reportedly have a prenup.

Hilary Duff GETTY IMAGES

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Activism in the acceptance

Academy Awards. Patricia Arquette uses Oscars platform to address the issue of wage equality

Patricia Arquette advocated for wage equality after accepting the Oscar for best supporting actress in Boyhood during an emotional outburst at the end of her carefully scripted speech Sunday.

The 46-year-old actress played the mother of Ellar Coltrane's Mason in Richard Linklater's sweeping look at a boy's life, filmed over 12 years.

Presenter Jared Leto wiped red lipstick, bestowed in a kiss from fellow nominee Emma Stone, from Arquette's face before she unfolded a piece of paper.

Despite donning glasses, she held the paper at arm's length and thanked a litany of family, co-stars and nominees, and plugged an online organization she supports.

Arquette wrapped up by saying, "To every woman who gave birth to every taxpayer and citizen of this nation, we have fought for everybody else's equal rights. It's our time to have wage equality once for all. And equal rights for women in the United States of America."

Oscar-winning actress Patricia Arquette is seen here in Boyhood, a film in which the viewers follow her through struggles as a single mom over a 12-year period. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS / IFC FILMS

Bring on a change

It is time for women. Equal means equal. The truth is the older women get the less money they make.

Patricia Arquette

Fellow nominee Meryl Streep rose to her feet and pointed at Arquette, shouting, "Yes! Yes!" from the audience.

Backstage, Arquette again spoke passionately about women deserving equal pay.

"People think we have equal rights," she said. "We won't until we pass an equal rights amendment.

"It is time for women. Equal means equal. The truth is the older women get, the less money they make."

Arquette said she shunned having a manicure earlier in the day for "that dreaded manicam," so she could instead focus on doing work for her online organization.

Arquette said she's helped thousands of people and she vowed, "I will help millions of people."

Arquette's next project is a return to the small screen, starring in new series CSI: Cyber debuting in March.

Also nominated were Laura Dern in Wild; Keira Knightley in The Imitation Game; Stone in Birdman; and Streep for Into the Woods.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MERYL STREEP

Praise pours in

Valerie Jarrett, adviser to President Barack Obama, cheered Arquette on Twitter.

- "Thx for using your speech to advocate for #EqualPay and for understanding that when women succeed, America succeeds," Jarrett wrote.
- Filmmaker Michael Moore tweeted Arquette is "a brilliant citizen."
- Others cheering Arquette on Twitter included former Oscar winner Marlee Matlin, Maria Shriver and actresses Audra McDonald and Rita Wilson.

Important issues take centre stage at awards

Hollywood is smarter than you thought. Whether by design or chance, the 87th Academy Awards elegantly and subtly shifted the tone of the season from a reductive fixation on snubs and fact-checking to a positive celebration of original filmmaking and purposeful advocacy for causes as diverse as immigration and suicide. Here's a roundup of some of the issues discussed:

The biggest winner Sunday night was Birdman director Alejandro Gonzalez, left, but Sean Penn's comments about a "green card" raised some eyebrows. GETTY IMAGES

ALS and Alzheimer's

In accepting the award for best actress for Still Alice, Julianne Moore said the movie shines a light on Alzheimer's, saying:

"People with Alzheimer's deserve to be seen."

Eddie Redmayne, accepting the best actor award for his portrayal of Stephen Hawking in The Theory of Everything, said: "This Oscar belongs to all of those people around the world battling ALS."

Suicide

Graham Moore (pictured right), who won the Oscar for best adapted screenplay for The Imitation Game, said in his acceptance speech that he had tried to kill himself as a teenager.

"When I was 16, I tried to kill myself because I felt weird and I felt different and I felt like I did not belong," he said. "I would like this moment to be for the kid out there who feels like she's weird and different and feels like she doesn't belong. ... Yes, you do."

Backstage, Moore said he saw the public moment as a rare opportunity for a writer and figured that "I might as well use it to say something meaningful."

Immigration

Sean Penn raised eyebrows with a reference he made to green cards in presenting the Oscar for best picture to Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu for Birdman, but the two are friends and Inarritu interpreted the comment as a joke.

Earlier in the ceremony, Dana Perry said that her son had killed himself. Perry made her comments in accepting the Oscar for best documentary for Crisis Hotline: Veterans Press 1.

"We should talk about suicide out loud," she said.

"Who gave this son of a bitch his green card?" Penn said.

Inarritu, who is Mexican, hugged Penn and joked that the U.S. government might now impose immigration rules on the academy: "Two Mexicans in a row, that's suspicious."

Alfonso Cuaron, another Mexican director, won for Gravity last year.

On a serious note, he said, he hoped the "latest generation of immigrants ... can be treated with the same dignity and respect of the ones who came before and built this incredible immigrant nation."

Democracy and Citizenfour

Laura Poitras used part of her speech accepting the award for best documentary for Citizenfour to note that "the disclosures that Edward Snowden reveals don't only expose threats to our privacy, but to our democracy."

But when the camera went back to Oscar host Neil Patrick Harris, he was quick to make a reference to the controversy surrounding Snowden: "The subject of Citizenfour couldn't be here for some treason."

Snowden is living in Russia to avoid arrest in the U.S. His supporters think he's a hero; critics think he's a traitor.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

GETTY IMAGES

Best breakup-inspired albums

On March 16, Björk will release the physical version of Vulnicura, the album that leaked to the Internet in late January and became available on iTunes shortly thereafter. In nine new tracks, the Icelandic artist explores the consequences of the end of a relationship — specifically, hers with contemporary artist Matthew Barney. To mark the occasion, here's a selection of some of the most notable breakup-inspired albums from recent music history. **AFP**

The Visitors by Abba

Even in the land of Abba, with its peppy beats and optimistic lyrics, breaking up is hard to do. The Visitors, released in 1981, is the band's eighth and final album, and the one that represents the collapse of the group. Benny and Frida had already announced their divorce when the band went into the studio, as had Agnetha and Björn. The breakup theme underscores the entire record and is particularly obvious in the track When All Is Said and Done.

Blood on the Tracks by Bob Dylan

Dylan wrote this album, released in 1975, after the breakdown of his marriage to Sara Lownds, his companion of a decade. While the divorce sent the singer-songwriter into a deep depression, it was arguably instrumental in bringing the world such classics as Tangled Up in Blue and You're Gonna Make Me Lonesome When You Go.

21 by Adele

No one likes to hear it when they're going through it, but sometimes a breakup is a blessing in disguise. For proof, look no further than Adele, who wrote her second album, 21, after parting ways with her companion at the time. Who can say whether the separation was inevitable, but at any rate, the young singer's career skyrocketed after she became single. The album sold over 20 million copies worldwide and scored a few Grammy Awards, and Adele even went on to pick up an Oscar in the following year for her contribution to the Skyfall soundtrack.

For Emma, Forever Ago by Bon Iver

In 2007, a certain Emma left her boyfriend Justin Vernon, who decided to mend his broken heart in a cabin in the woods of Wisconsin. Three months later, he returned to civilization with his new music project, Bon Iver, and an album with nine tear-jerking tracks. For Emma, Forever Ago quickly found favour with indie music critics, and the track Skinny Love went on to reach an even larger audience thanks to a cover by singer Birdy.

Life is Good by Nas

"I was your Johnny Depp, you was my Janis Joplin," Nas raps on Bye Baby, a track from his 2012 album Life Is Good. The couplet is addressed to the rapper's ex-wife, the R&B singer Kelis, who had filed for divorce a few years earlier while pregnant. On the album cover, Nas holds her wedding dress across his lap and wears a dissatisfied expression, suggesting that life is not actually so good after all.

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Vinyl history

The singular matter of the 1.5-inch hole

SOUND CHECK
Alan Cross
scene@metronews.ca

If you've ever purchased music on vinyl, I guarantee this question has crossed your mind: "Why is the hole in the middle of a seven-inch single so big?" The answer is fascinating.

For 50 years, the maximum capacity of a record — the standard 10-inch 78 RPM single — was four minutes. Then in June 1948, Columbia Records introduced the 12-inch long-playing album — the LP — which spun at 33 1/3 RPM and had a capacity of about 20 minutes per side. It was now possible to fit an entire classical work on just two sides of a record.

Columbia offered to license this technology to other record labels. But RCA, their main rival, would have none of it. Annoyed that Columbia had exploited technology RCA had pioneered but abandoned back in the '30s, they came up with a new innovation: the seven-inch 45 RPM single. RCA's reasoning was that people were used to one song per side of a record. Why change now?

And then there was the matter of the hole.

The hole for Columbia's LP fit what had become the standard record player spindle size: about three-tenths of an inch. The 45's hole was a whopping 1.5 inches for two reasons. First, RCA was a manufacturer of record players. They saw an opportunity to create a new format that could only be played on RCA machines made with permanent six-inch tall spindles 1.5 inches in diameter.

Users could stack a half-dozen 45s above the platter. Once a record was over, the tonearm would swing away and the next 45 would drop into place. No more changing records every four minutes, which essentially equalled the listening experience offered by the LP.

But if a record was going to drop from a height of six inches to a platter rotating at 45 RPM, engineers knew it would be subjected to a substantial amount of torque, force that would soon wear a traditional-sized hole into an out-of-round shape, resulting in wobbly turns that would damage the record. The hole had to be bigger to evenly distribute the shock of a seven-inch going from 0 to 45 RPM almost instantly.

Of course, it was easy enough for non-RCA companies to make turntables that could run at 45 RPM. And to defeat the proprietary hole size? A little insert first manufactured by the Webster Chicago Company in 1950.

Nice try, RCA.

ISTOCK

Sleater-Kinney makes a surprise comeback

Earlier this month, when the three members of Sleater-Kinney took the stage together for their first full show in almost a decade, singer and guitarist Corin Tucker felt overwhelmed.

"The physicality of it was very intense," she says. "It's a very physical thing to do Sleater-Kinney." The band, which also consists of guitarist and singer Carrie Brownstein and drummer Janet Weiss, went on hiatus after their 2005 album, The Woods. Tucker concentrated on family life and a solo project called The Corin Tucker Band while Brownstein and Weiss played in the band Wild Flag. We talked to Tucker about reviving the iconic group. They play Toronto in March, and in Vancouver in May.

Sleater-Kinney BRIGITTE SIRE

Tell me about the secrecy involved in this reunion.

We weren't that secretive about it. We would tell people what was going on, when asked, and it was a "Just between you and me, this is what's going on" thing, so we told probably about 200 people, including Sub Pop, everybody there knew for a while what was going on. It's surprising to me that it didn't get out more than it did.

One of the most riveting things to watch onstage with Sleater-Kinney was always the almost telepathic communication between band members.

Yeah, I mean, there definitely is that chemistry, and I think just in the four shows that we've done, there's already been a lot of that going on. I think the first show was almost like a little bit shocking to be a band again, in a good way!

PAT HEALY/METRO IN NEW YORK CITY

Followup

Lorde to start work on second album

In a visit to Australian radio station Triple J, Lorde collaborator Joel Little revealed the pop singer is set to return to the studio next month to work on the followup to Pure Heroine.

A fellow New Zealander, Little was heavily involved with writing and producing Lorde's debut 2013 album, and the two have continued to collaborate since. They earned a Grammy Award for Song of the Year for the Pure Heroine single Royals.

When asked how soon a second album might be expected, Little answered: "Really soon. Within the next month or so we'll be in the studio."

AFP

Lorde GETTY IMAGES

UGGS, CANADA GOOSE, MOOSE KNUCKLES, MICHAEL KORS, SUPER DRY, TOMS SHOES, AG, KATE SPADE, WILD FOX, HOUSE OF HARLOW, NUDIE, GSTAR, TRUE RELIGION, DIESEL, ROCK REVIVAL, VINCE, NAKED ZEBRA, RAG + BONE, SEVEN FOR ALL MANKIND, JUST ME, HUDSON JEANS, FRED PERRY, LACOSTE, BENCH, WINTER KATE, MODERN VINTAGE, MAJESTIC PARIS, PSYCHO BUNNY, BOY LONDON AND MORE.

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LIFE 3

Skin care from the inside out

Besides treating your skin gently by taking shorter showers and moisturizing, you could be doing more to keep it looking and feeling healthy during winter and beyond. Cut out as much sugar as possible because it makes you age faster by interfering with collagen production. Keep green tea handy since it's packed with catechins that boost blood flow. And add these foods to keep your cheeks rosy.

EVA KIS
Metro in NYC

Dark chocolate

Is there anything cocoa can't cure? Opt for dark chocolate that's at least 70 per cent cacao — a German study found that the high concentration of flavanols helps thicken skin and boost hydration.

Olive oil

Whether it's the polyphenols keeping free radicals at bay or monounsaturated fatty acids lubricating skin from the inside out, a 2012 study found that women who ate more than two teaspoons a day showed 30 per cent fewer signs of aging. Look for the cold-pressed and extra virgin kind, which doesn't lose nutrients during processing.

Sardines

Give these little fish a try. Their omega-3 content is similar to salmon, and those healthy fatty acids are working to keep skin supple by supporting elasticity.

Fill your basket with these foods to incorporate into a skin-care routine. ISTOCK

Kiwi

They're packed with nearly twice as much vitamin C, pound for pound, as oranges, a vitamin that boosts collagen production, firms your skin and reduces dryness.

Sunflower seeds

A teaspoonful on your salad is enough to get about a third of your daily vitamin E (which should already be part of your skin care routine). It also has zinc. Both nutrients strengthen cell membranes for a smoother complexion.

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As if kale needed another thing to add to its resumé. For your skin, it contains the powerful antioxidants lutein and zeaxanthin that eliminate free radicals. Bonus: Kale also contains vitamin C.

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Study. Try this one habit to improve your sleep

Meditation could help you rest easy. ISTOCK

If you're trying to get better sleep, conventional wisdom has just been unseated by meditation.

Short of prescriptions, the recommendations for getting quality sleep have long been things like setting a bedtime routine and keeping the TV out of the bedroom.

But a new study just released by the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, put a traditional program for changing poor sleep habits up against one where participants were trained in a mindful meditation practice.

Though the study was small, involving 49 people with disturbed sleep patterns, Dr. David S. Black and his team found that those taught meditation techniques improved their sleep by 27 per cent, while the better bedtime routine group only showed an 11 per cent rise in sleep quality.

The meditation group also showed improvement in secondary symptoms like insomnia, depression and fatigue severity. Both groups saw comparable, moderate declines in anxiety, stress and inflammation.

Sleep disturbances are associated with higher levels of fatigue, mood problems like depression and general lower quality of life.

Another recent study found an additional benefit of meditation: It helped stall age-related decline in brain function.

EVA KIS, METRO IN NYC

Five ways Fido makes you a better person

Dogs. Sometimes man's best friend doesn't get enough credit for making your world a better place

Miss P the beagle took home barking rights at the recent Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, but there's no debating that the real top dog is the one sitting next to you.

Whether you've trained him to stay off the couch or he's watching the show snuggled closer than your sweetie, he didn't become your best friend because of a shiny coat and perfect posture. It happened the same way any friendship does: shared interests, mutual respect, enjoying each other's company.

And, like the best of friends, along the way your dog made you a better person, too.

Turned you into a morning person

Bet the last time you got up before 7 a.m. was during the first year of university for the required newbie classes. But when your dog has to go, so do you.

Your dog isn't just your bestie, he's also made you a morning person. ISTOCK

Made you more emotionally intelligent.

There is nothing more motivating to develop any latent telepathy you may have than trying to communicate with someone who doesn't speak your language (or any language). The next thing to mind-reading is learning to read their body language — you know which wag of the tail means they're happy, and which means they're impatient and your shoe is going to pay for it.

Taught you good management skills

Whatever their size, dogs tend to have larger-than-life personalities.

Some habits are endearing, while others require your guidance to manage. You learn to give encouragement, acknowledge success, and, yes, discipline when necessary.

Dogs only respect you if you respect them — a lesson direct from Management 101.

Held you accountable

Making a plan and sticking to it maybe wasn't your strong point before.

But when there's someone expecting you at a certain time that you can't just blow off or reassure with a text, you'd better be there. Run out of dog food because you didn't feel like dragging a 30-pound bag home? Guess Fido is eating your dinner.

Put things in perspective

Dogs can sense when you're feeling gloomy, and they're not so much into giving you space to resolve it.

You can sulk, and they may commiserate with you for a while, but not indefinitely. Life is still going on, and there's no better reminder of that than a dog who still needs everything they needed yesterday, and will need tomorrow — and that means you have to be the same person you were before whatever happened to cause your gloomy mood, too. EVA KIS, METRO IN NYC

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Study

Dishwashing may prevent allergies

A study released in the journal Pediatrics reveals kids living in households in which dishes are washed by hand may experience fewer allergy-related illnesses.

The Swedish questionnaire-based study looked at 1,029 kids aged 7 and 8 and included questions on asthma and eczema.

The study was based on the notion that certain household practices may increase microbial exposure, which can induce immunologic tolerance during early life. AFP

Take comfort in low-cal cabbage rolls

Casseroles. This is one recipe where cutting corners yields some great results

Comfort food casseroles used to take too much time and cost too much in terms of calories, but with a few smart shortcuts, they can be your weeknight secret.

In these rolls, I used PC instant brown rice, which saved me 40 minutes and layered the cabbage rather than roll each individual one.

This recipe serves 10. TERESA ALBERT

Ingredients

- 2 cups beef broth
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 head Savoy cabbage
- 2 cups instant brown rice
- 1 tbsp Italian seasoning
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 onions, grated
- 2 carrots, grated
- 1 tsp grapeseed oil
- 1 lb ground beef medium
- 1 jar tomato sauce

Directions

1. Bring broth and water to boil in a very large pot. Cut core from cabbage centre and drop, cut part facing down into broth.

Allow the liquid to return to the boil to loosen and soften leaves.

2. Remove cabbage from liquid and peel off 12 large leaves of cabbage.

3. Add rice to the broth, cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Stir in Italian seasoning and garlic powder.

Empty into a large bowl and set aside.

4. In the same pot, cook grated onions and carrots in a little oil until soft and add to rice bowl.

5. Use the same pot to cook ground beef in 1/2 cup water until fully boiling and cooked through.

Pour off all water and fat through strainer and add to the rice pot. Next, add half a jar of tomato sauce to the rice.

6. Roll cabbage leaves lengthwise and cut across the grain to make strips and lay half into the bottom of a casserole dish.

7. Top with rice and beef mixture. Top with remaining chopped cabbage leaves and remaining tomato sauce.

(Can be stored in the fridge up to 2 days at this stage).

8. Cover with foil and bake 375 degrees for 20 minutes.

THERESA ALBERT IS A FOOD COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST AND TORONTO PERSONAL NUTRITIONIST. SHE IS @THERESAALBERT ON TWITTER AND FOUND DAILY AT MYFRIENDINFOOD.COM

Health check

Learn about what's on those labels

NUTRI-BITES
Theresa Albert
DHN, RNCP
myfriendinfood.com

Was your New Year's resolution to read labels more vigilantly? Didn't think so, but it could be one key thing standing between you and your health.

Studies show that knowing which package is better for you does influence your purchase.

Of course, if you are buying fresh fruits and vegetables, you don't need a label because there isn't one thing in that section that is unhealthy.

The tricky bit is the time it takes to compare products while standing in the aisle.

But there are shortcuts:

- Look only at the ingredient list. It should be very short and contain only whole foods
- The per cent daily value of sodium represents your maximum for the day, so each snack food should be less than 15 per cent per serving.
- The less sugar the better, no matter the source (including fruit!)
- Whole frozen meals should represent less than 500 calories per serving and you should be careful to only have the specified serving size

Be sure that you are filling at least half of every plate with items from the fresh produce aisle and you can't go wrong.

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Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Depression or Anxiety

Our research study will evaluate the benefits of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for depression and anxiety symptoms in young adults.

This 8-week research program is administered via the internet and includes weekly phone or email contact with a psychologist.

It can be completed at your own pace, via computer, tablet or smartphone.

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Participants will be randomized (like flipping a coin) to 1 of 2 groups:
You will have a 50% chance of receiving CBT immediately, and a 50% chance of being in a wait-list control group.
Those in the control group will get access to the program after 8 weeks.

You may be eligible to participate if you:
- Are between the ages of 18-29 years
- Have had depression/anxiety symptoms for at least 2 weeks
- If on medication, have had no dose changes for at least 4 weeks

Participants will have regular contact with the study team throughout the program.

For more information, please call
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camh

For more information on programs and services at CAMH, please visit www.camh.ca or call at 416-535-8501 (1-800-463-6273).
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Keep your eyes on the prize like an Olympian

Career. Gold medallist Evan Lysacek explains how he manages to stay in the zone

LAKSHMI GANDHI
Metro New York

American figure skater Evan Lysacek won the gold medal at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver. GETTY IMAGES

Maintain your focus

Competing as a teen, Lysacek admits that he did have moments where he wished that he could have hung out with friends instead of constantly heading to the rink.

- "It's an abnormal life," he admits. "But I'm sure that there are a lot of fields where that same sacrifice and discipline come in."

Olympian Evan Lysacek is quick to say that he was never the best skater on the ice.

"I felt that I was never as naturally talented or, overall, as good as my competitors," the 29-year-old tells us.

"But I always felt that if I could outwork them, then I could outperform them."

That hard work paid off for the American figure skater in 2010, when he took home the gold medal at the Vancouver Olympics.

Along with Paralympic swimmer Brad Snyder, Lysacek has been touring college campuses across the country as part of Deloitte's Road Show with Team USA. The two athletes have been speaking about their career journeys and explaining to students how they carved a path to success.

We caught up with Lysacek after his recent appearance at New York University and asked him for his tips on how ambitious readers can achieve their career goals.

Don't let anxiety derail you

Lysacek often speaks of the anxiety that temporarily threw him off during his routine in the Vancouver trials. Since then, he's come up with several ways to manage his anxiety but says things aren't perfect. "It's constantly evolving," he says. "It's like chasing a moving target. But for me, as much as I can bring the preparation in to manage the stress and anxiety, I do it."

Work away the worries

"... As much as I can bring the preparation in to manage the stress and anxiety, I do it."
Evan Lysacek
Olympic figure skater

Be willing to change course

After skating for more than half his life, Lysacek recently embarked on a new career in the real estate industry.

"I'm learning a new industry and taking on as much responsibility as I can," he says. "And I'm just trying to bring a lot of the ideals that I learned in my first chapter into this."

But, he adds, he hasn't left the skating life behind and will be going on tour again in March.

Balancing the two worlds has been interesting. "I'm very sore all of the time. I'm thinking about contracts, leasing, square footage while also trying to think about skating technique," he says.

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There is still more time to apply for **Personal Credits of up to $3000** for educational, language or cultural programs.

Individuals who received a Common Experience Payment under the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement are eligible for up to $3000 in Personal Credits for education programs and services.

These include courses at universities, colleges, trade or training schools or for programs and workshops provided by community-based groups or cultural centres for activities related to Aboriginal language and culture. Personal Credits can be used by a Common Experience Payment recipient, shared with up to two family members or pooled for group education services.

The deadline to apply has been extended to **March 9, 2015.** Help with completing the Personal Credits Acknowledgment Form is available.

Find out more at www.residentialschoolsettlement.ca or by phone:

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- Assembly of First Nations: **1-866-869-6789**
- Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, Iqaluit: **1-888-646-0006**
- Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Inuvik: **1-867-777-7092**
- Makivik Corporation, Quebec: **1-418-522-2224**

How a personal website can translate to career success

Career. Your digital footprint is stronger than you think

DAN SCHAWBEL
Metro New York

Employers are searching for information about you online, whether you like it or not. If they don't find you, or something positive about you, then you will get passed over for the next candidate that pops up.

More and more, employers are turning to the Internet in order to fill positions in their workforce because it's easy, they can conduct background checks, and they are looking for candidates with strong tech skills.

In a new study conducted by branded.me and .ME Registry, they found that 84 per cent of professionals have received benefits from having a personal website and 63 per cent said websites are more valuable than resumés.

Eighty-five per cent said a personal website will become more important over the next five years.

Here are a few tips, based on the research, that will help you craft a strong website that employers will notice.

Purchase your own domain name

Having your own name as a domain name (yourfullname.com or .net or .me) is extremely valuable because it will rank higher for your name in Google, and it's easier to direct people to it if they want more information on your background.

In the study, 72 per cent said that they have a personalized domain name and 73 per cent said that having one is either very important or important for their online brand.

You should claim your domain name before someone else does and charges you thousands of dollars for it.

Add various elements to your website

Your website should showcase your unique talents and abilities as well as your personal interests and goals. This way, you can connect with other professionals who share mutual interests while impressing employers with your achievements and experience.

In the study, the elements of a website that received the best response from employers were work experience (27 per cent), pictures (26 per cent), biography (22 per cent) and personal interests (19 per cent).

Use business cards to market your website

While websites and blogs are still innovative ways to distinguish yourself, the traditional forms of marketing are still valuable. Professionals of all ages still ask to see business cards when they're networking.

Old-fashioned networking still works.

Take some time to refine your online image lest an interested employer Googles your name. ISTOCK

Create a blog as part of your website

- Blogs enable you to express your views on topics of your choice, and by producing blog posts, your website will rank higher in Google.

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Collagen is key in joint maintenance

When many people hear the word "collagen," Hollywood-celebrity lip plumping springs to mind. In fact, naturally produced collagen plays a vital role in a properly functioning body. But starting at age 30, collagen production slows down — and after 50, it drops significantly.

Collagen is produced by many types of specialized cells called "fibroblasts" and is gathered in the connective tissues.

It has two roles: it's responsible for the cohesion of tissues and organs, and it provides those tissues and organs with hydration, resistance and flexibility.

Each wall of the body's tendons consists of more than 95 per cent collagen. The ends of the tendons are composed almost entirely of collagen, up to 99 per cent.

Our tendons' properties and functions are directly related to the structure and quality of collagen fibers.

Tendons provide essential support in joint movement, including attaching muscles to bones and joining and stabilizing skeletal joints. Tendons also allow muscles to be at the right distance from joints. The age-related decrease of collagen weakens the area where tendons are attached to the bone, increasing injury risk.

According to the World Health Organization, chronic joint degeneration is one of the most disabling diseases in developed countries.

For those who have these conditions, such as osteoarthritis, 80 per cent have movement limitations and 25 per cent can't perform daily activities.

The beneficial effects of collagen peptides in joint maintenance have been reported in several clinical studies. Another study that assessed the efficiency of collagen peptides on people with primary osteoarthritis of the knee showed a significant improvement in knee-joint comfort.

The results of these and other studies indicate that the use of collagen peptides supports joint health and may reduce the risk of joint deterioration in high-risk groups.

THE GLUE

Connective tissues form a network that's rich in collagen, which is found in almost every part of our body. In other words, collagen is the "glue" that keeps our body together. Aging and lifestyle affect several metabolic processes, including collagen production. Joint stiffness is a common condition caused by age-related collagen loss.

SHUTTERSTOCK

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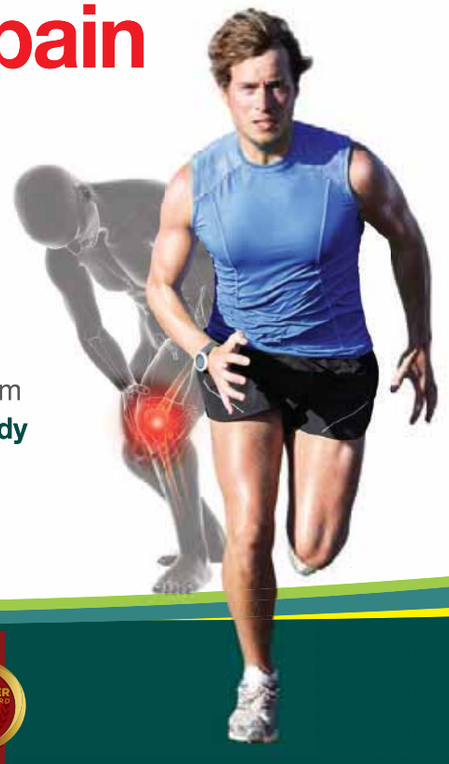

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Navarro stands firm with trade request

MLB. Projected backup catcher remains polite and professional to open spring training

Blue Jays catchers Russell Martin, left, and Dioner Navarro get ready to take part in batting practice in Dunedin, Fla., on Monday. NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Toronto Blue Jays catcher Dioner Navarro, facing an uncertain future with the arrival of Russell Martin, confirmed Monday that he wants out.

The 31-year-old from Venezuela said he had asked the team for a trade back in November when Martin was signed to an $82-million US, five-year contract.

Navarro says nothing has changed. He wants to go to a team where he can play every day.

He says he holds no grudges and will work hard the whole spring, hoping an opportunity comes his way. But he acknowledged he was frustrated and a little disappointed that nothing has happened yet in terms of a new home.

"I don't know when did it go wrong, if anything did go wrong," Navarro said of his time with Toronto. "I'm just going to be ready and do my job."

Navarro, who hit .274 with 12 home runs and 59 runs batted in last season, faces being a designated hitter and backup catcher with the Jays. He is on the final year of a two-year deal that will pay him $5 million this season.

While Navarro was professional and polite in speaking to the media, his public desire to leave the club was hardly the opening spring training message the Jays wanted.

Still manager John Gibbons, who spoke to the media before Navarro, said he understood his catcher's frustration.

"I can't blame him for not being happy. He's a competitor, he's a big-league player, a good one," Gibbons said, insisting there was a place for Navarro on the team.

Martin said he had a good relationship with Navarro, dating back to their time with the Dodgers.

"We're going to both try and help the team as best we can," Martin said. "I'm sure that if he could be in a gig where he could catch every day, I'm sure he would prefer that but that's something that's out of his control for now.

"The only thing he can control is his attitude and so far it's been fantastic. And (it) hasn't made me feel weird at all. He's been a good teammate so far. It's only Day 1 but the attitude is the right one and hopefully we can keep that going." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"I would just like to play every day somewhere."

Blue Jays catcher Dioner Navarro who drops in the depth chart with the arrival of Russell Martin

Catching the knuckleball

Russell Martin drew a lot of attention during his opening bullpen session with Daniel Norris.Knuckleballer R.A. Dickey used personal catcher Josh Thole for his throwing time.

- Manager John Gibbons said that was just for the first day of camp. Martin will be given the chance to catch for Dickey.

NHL

Montador donated brain to research

Before concussions were a hot-button topic in hockey, Steve Montador knew all about the impact of head injuries. Five years ago, while he was still playing in the NHL, Montador committed to donating his brain to future research.

Dr. Charles Tator of the University of Toronto told that story at Montador's memorial service Saturday in Mississauga. It's one final showing of generosity that many of his friends and former teammates didn't know about.

"He didn't know when it was going to be, but when it did happen he wanted to donate his brain," former Calgary Flames teammate Craig Conroy said.

Montador died Feb. 15 at the age of 35.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Hernandez trial

Cleaner claims to have found guns

A woman who cleaned the home of former New England Patriots player Aaron Hernandez testified Monday at his murder trial that she saw two guns there before the killing.

Hernandez has pleaded not guilty to the June 17, 2013, killing of Odin Lloyd, who was dating the sister of Hernandez's fiancée. His body was found in an industrial park not far from Hernandez's home. The .45-calibre gun used to shoot him six times was never found.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A number of teams are said to be interested in Joffrey Lupul, despite his well-chronicled history of injury. RICHARD LAUTENS/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Trade rumours make sense to Leafs' Lupul

NHL. Winger's age makes him unlikely to survive Toronto rebuild

Maple Leafs winger Joffrey Lupul says he wants to stay in Toronto, but understands if — at 31 — he's not in the plans for a team that is on the brink of a rebuild.

"I want to stay here," Lupul said on Monday. "I like playing here, I love Toronto.

"But if I'm not in the plans here, if they are truly are wanting to make as many changes as I keep hearing about, I'm comfortable that way, too."

"This is where I want to be. If I am going to be somewhere else, it's not going to be that difficult."

Lupul has missed about 30 per cent of games due to injury since coming to Toronto. Montreal, Boston and the New York Rangers have had scouts following the Leafs.

There are no shortages of Leafs rumoured on the way out: Daniel Winnik and David Booth are unrestricted free agents on July 1. Lupul has three more years left on a deal with a cap hit of $5.25 million. Moving Lupul, like moving captain Dion Phaneuf (six years after this with a cap-hit of $7 million), would create plenty of cap space for general manager Dave Nonis.

A Lupul deal would be a lot easier, since his contract is smaller. He has a "limited no trade" clause in his deal that requires him to submit a list of teams every summer to which he'd allow himself to be traded. He says he doesn't have any inside information on the team's plans, and that no one in management has said anything to him. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Pelicans peck away at Raps

Pelicans guard Tyreke Evans, left, goes to the basket against Toronto Raptors guard Kyle Lowry on Monday night in New Orleans. Lowry had 22 points, five assists and three steals but the Raptors blew a 12-point halftime lead, falling 100-97.

GERALD HERBERT/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NBA

Bosh nears release from hospital

The Miami Heat say all-star forward Chris Bosh continues to improve and will leave a South Florida hospital soon.

Bosh has been hospitalized since last week because blood clots were found on a lung. He will not return to play this season.

Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said Monday that Bosh will be released soon, though he has not been told an exact date.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Basketball

"This age is beyond a golden age. Let's hope, though, that it's not just a moment in time, and that we've turned a corner as far as how the game as grown."

Steve Nash speaking about Canada's young stars such as Andrew Wiggins while in Toronto for a sponsorship announcement Monday. Nash is the general manager of the Canadian men's national team. Questions about the Lakers guard's own NBA future and his health were off-limits.

Tuesday, February 24, 2015

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AUGMENTED REALITY

Stuck on 12 Across? Scan this image with your Metro News app for today's crossword and Sudoku answers. It's OK. No one's watching.

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Someone you believed was trustworthy will show their true colours. In a way, they have done you a favour — you know not to trust them again.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
If you find it hard to communicate with those around you over the next 24 hours, it may be the planets' way of telling you this is not a good time to discuss serious matters.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Someone in a position of power will say something that annoys you today, not least because it seems to cast doubts on your expertise. Don't take it too seriously.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
You won't be sociable today but that's OK; you need time to plan your next move. Don't give up on a long-term ambition. It *can* be done.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Spell out what it is you intend to do over the next few days so there can be no confusion. However, having made your plans public you must stick with them.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Don't let anyone pressure you into making a hasty decision today, especially as it will be you who gets the blame if it all goes wrong.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Your mind may be sharp and clear but that does not mean the conclusions you reach will be right. Wherever possible, do your own research.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You may be tempted to rush through a task at top speed, but if you do, you may make a bad job of it. Do it right the first time.

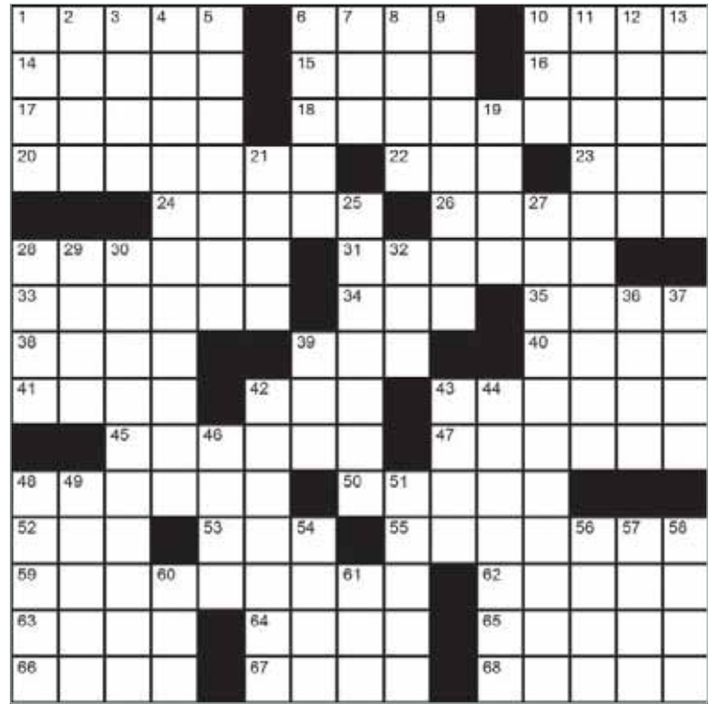
♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Plan ahead but try not to actually do anything. If you give your brain a rest today it will be working better later in the week, when important decisions have to be made.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You are having doubts about something you thought was a great idea. But don't give up, because a few days from now your doubts will be gone and it will be a great idea again.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You are desperate to make an impression, but don't break the rules or, worse, break the law. The impression must be positive, not negative.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
If someone asks you to help with a cause close to your heart, you will do so eagerly. But before you do, make sure you are dealing with professionals, not amateurs.

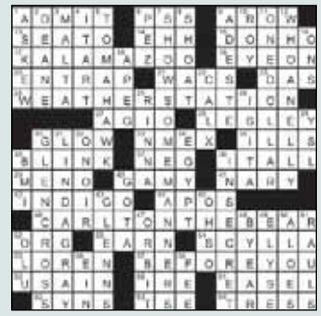
Crossword: Canada Across and Down by Kelly Ann Buchanan



Across
1. Tim __, Canadian journalist to which Prime Minister Trudeau made his famous 'just watch me' quote in 1970
6. Hungry feeling
10. Company bosses, collectively [abbr.]
14. Then: French
15. Moulding type
16. ___ knot
17. __ __ 6 a.m., like an alarm clock
18. CBSC = Canadian Broadcast __ Council
20. Canadian cycling great Curt
22. Casual shirt
23. Newspaper in Calif.'s largest city [acronym]
24. __ lights (Movie set brighteners)
26. Frill
28. Ms. Lansbury
31. Magical potion
33. "Fifty Shades of Grey" actor Jamie
34. Ms. Richie, briefly
35. Poetically approaching
38. __ __ now (Up to this point)
39. 'Sure' signal
40. Computers: Prefix to 'byte'
41. Dry: Spanish
42. Silent
43. #29-Down's answer, informally
45. Epoch when ancestors of the modern horse appeared
47. Furniture polish brand
48. Stage musical, Bye Bye __
50. Goat-antelope of Japan
52. Whichever
53. __-la-la!
55. Dance judge Nigel
59. __-__ sweater
62. Prince William's brother
63. "The Bridge on the River __" (1957)
64. "This should come __ __ surprise..."
65. Uplift
66. Video game maker
67. Nashville, __.
68. Mister, in Madrid

Down
1. Foolhardy
2. Epithet for Athena
3. Tolkien's trilogy, tiny-ly
4. Genetically-modified grub
5. Canadian actress Ms. Warren
6. Mail, in Montreal
7. 007, e.g.
8. Tidy
9. Not a name brand
10. Kingston Trio hit
11. 1991 Matthew Sweet song
12. Track star's 'necklace'
13. Preference
19. Two: French
21. Vancouver-born actress Valerie
25. Making-organisms 'instructions'
27. Vancouver Canucks mascot: 3 wds.
28. "Cold Mountain" (2003) heroine, and others
29. Olfactory organ
30. Show on Oprah's network OWN starring two Canadians, "Anna & Kristina's __ __"
32. Jar's closer
36. Watered-down rum
37. Smog
39. Convent dweller
42. Kalahari Desert animal
43. Agile
44. Garments
46. Adduce
48. Gives support to
49. Floored: 2 wds.
51. Mr. John
54. Cove: French
56. "__ Torino" (2008)
57. "Is that for here __ __ go?" (Fast food query)
58. Glancer
60. __ Fail (Irish coronation stone)
61. Hostel

Yesterday's Crossword

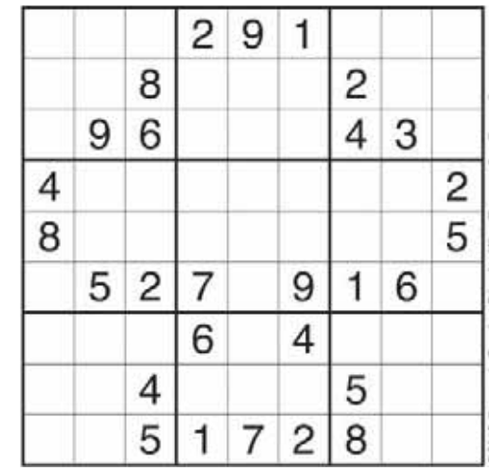


Online

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.



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Yesterday's Sudoku

8	1	2	6	4	3	5	9	7
5	9	6	2	8	7	3	4	1
7	3	4	9	5	1	8	6	2
2	7	5	8	3	6	9	1	4
1	4	8	7	2	9	6	3	5
3	6	9	5	1	4	7	2	8
9	2	1	3	7	8	4	5	6
4	8	3	1	6	5	2	7	9
6	5	7	4	9	2	1	8	3

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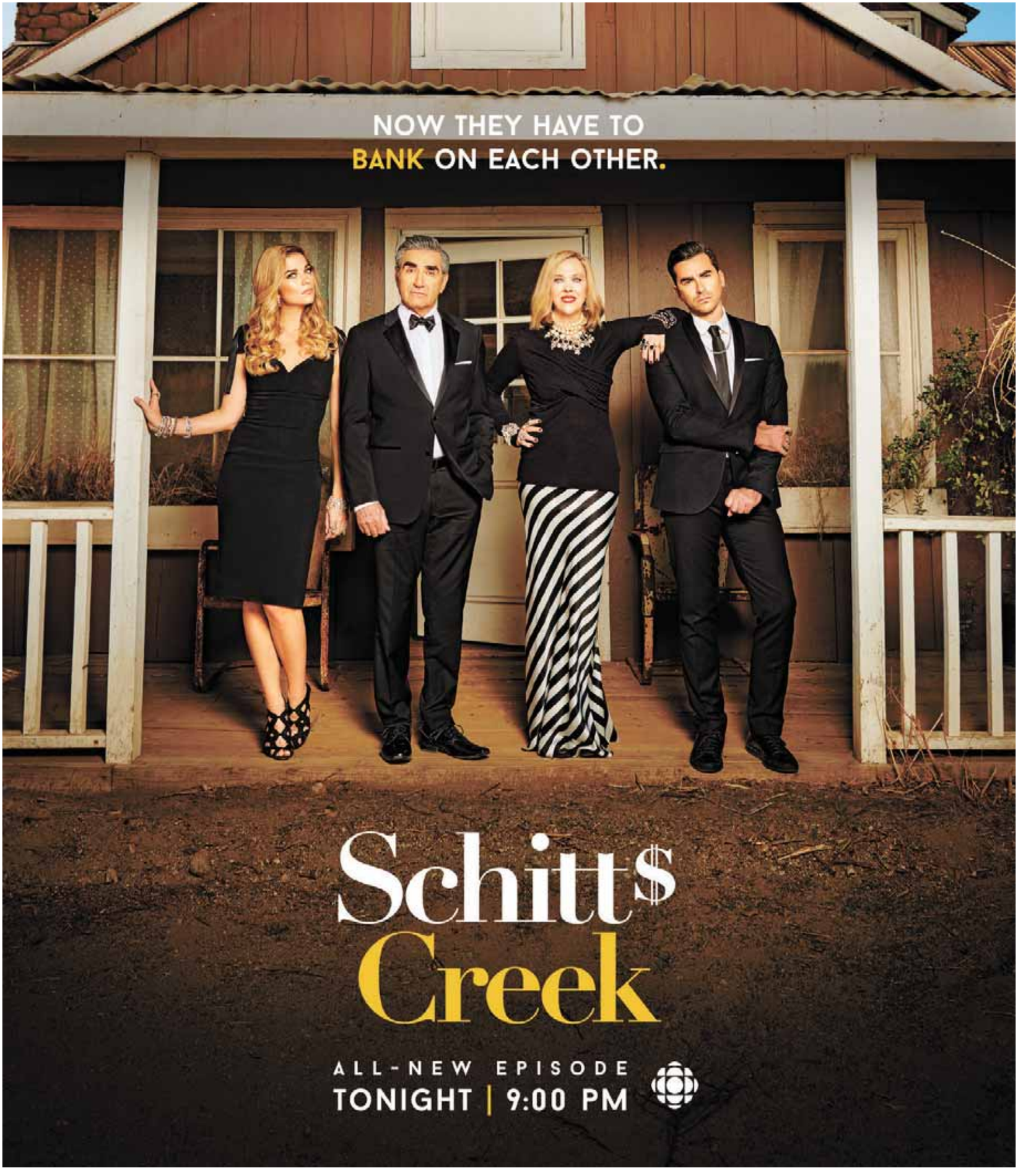
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